

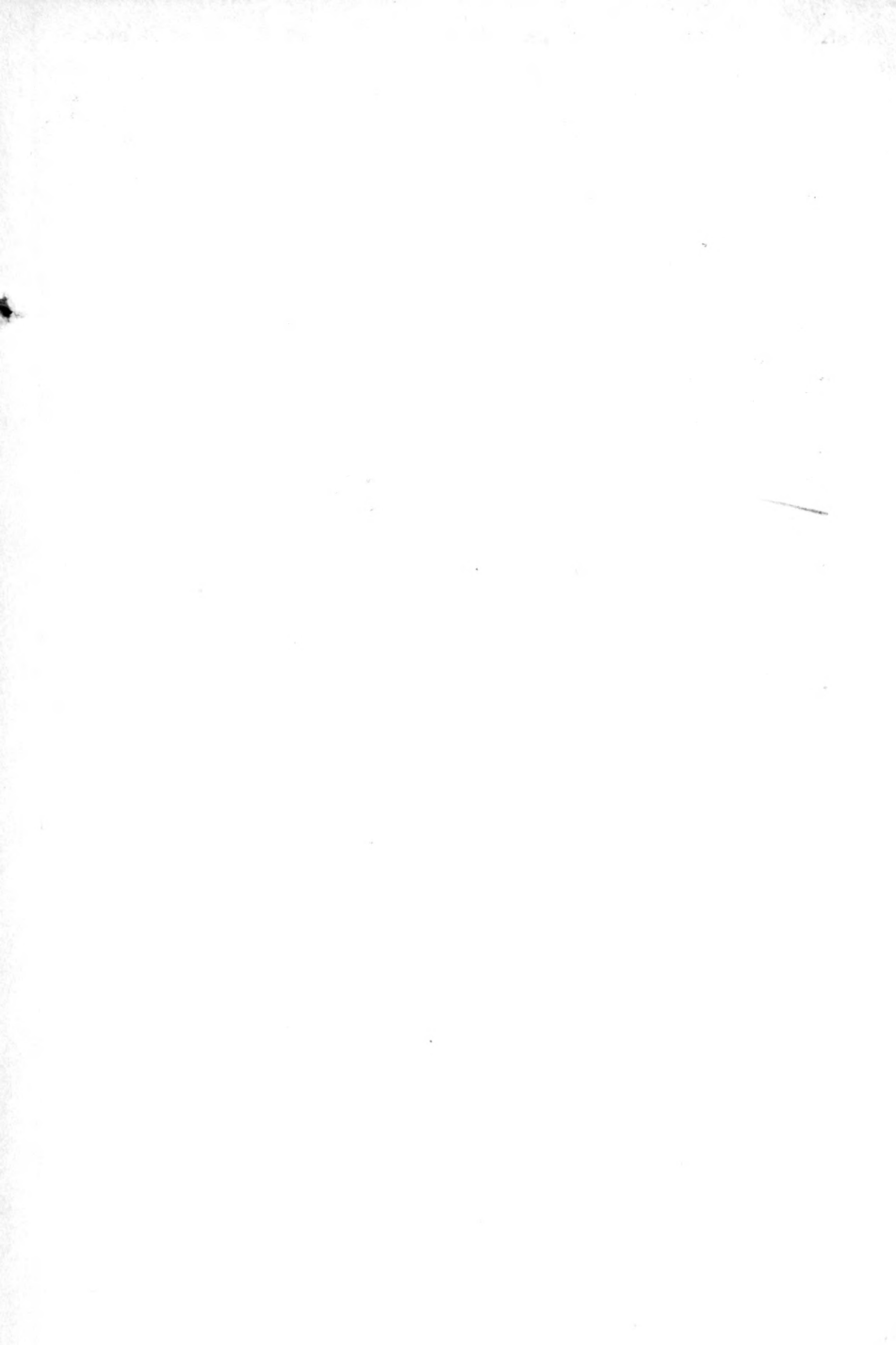
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# HEAVEN OPEN TO SOULS

Henry Churchill Semple, S.J.



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**HEAVEN OPEN TO SOULS**

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# HEAVEN OPEN TO SOULS

LOVE FOR GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS  
AND PERFECT CONTRITION EASY  
AND COMMON IN SOULS RE-  
SOLVED TO AVOID MORTAL SIN

By

Rev. HENRY CHURCHILL SEMPLE, S.J.

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of New York, Chaplain of Fordham University*



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## DEDICATORY PREFACE

Each one of the propositions at the head of the following chapters has been the subject of a paper which has been read and discussed in a theological conference under the direction of the author as moderator. The first thought of undertaking to put the matter of these papers into book form for the greater glory of God and the consolation, sanctification, and salvation of souls, was inspired by an earnest suggestion whispered by His Eminence during one of these debates. But for continued public and private kind and courteous encouragements from the Cardinal and his clergy, in the face of many long interruptions and other obstacles, the writer would not have persevered in the undertaking and finished the task, although so fascinating in itself. In the various stages of his labors he has received valued aids in multitudinous ways from self-sacrificing friends. These are so numerous that the list of their names would fill several pages and they are so modest that, as he feels, they will thank him for not thanking them by name in public print. To manifest that he is not insensible to kindnesses received, he begs leave to dedicate this book on the goodness in God and in man, to these generous collaborators, to his brother priests of this archdiocese, and especially to his tried, trusted, and trusting friend, His Most Reverend Eminence John Cardinal Farley, Archbishop of New York.

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY,  
*Feast of the Assumption, 1916.*



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# HEAVEN OPEN TO SOULS

## CHAPTER I

### OUTLINE OF THE EXPLANATIONS AND REASONS WHICH WILL MANIFEST THAT LOVE FOR GOD IS EASY AND COMMON

**A**RE acts of love and perfect contrition so hard in practice here on earth, among sons and daughters of Adam and Eve, as to be rare in fact save in the case of saints, who are ever few? Or rather, are they so easy with the help of Almighty God's interior graces as to be common among ordinary souls like ourselves, who are resolved to avoid mortal sin?

Let us take the case of children, soldiers, or religious and make the following suppositions: They know beforehand that every command of their superiors is reasonable and they are resolved to obey, at least in every grave matter. Besides, they know that these superiors are well-nigh perfect and possess great knowledge, wealth, power, and honor, and long to share all their sources of happiness with each one of their subjects and seek no return but loyal love.

In such a case, is it not easy and common for human subjects who are resolved to obey *such* human superiors to love them heartily for their own sake? Is there not in human nature a strong propensity to love as friends those who are so lovable in themselves and so loving toward us? In such a case is not hearty, disinterested love so easy that it is bound to be common?

Then make the following supposition with regard to God: I am resolved to keep His commandments, which I know beforehand to be most reasonable. I am thus resolved to avoid every grievous fault of thought, word, or deed. I then think in my heart of God my Father in heaven, and I know by reason and by faith that He is not merely well-nigh, but infinitely perfect and lovable in Himself and more loving toward

me than any human friend or father or mother can possibly be. Or I then think in my heart of our Lord Jesus Christ. As I know by faith, this Son of Mary is the one perfect man, the most beautiful of the sons of men. And what wondrous things He said and did and suffered for me and my salvation, out of pure love for me! And from the beams of beauty and love streaming through every pore of His sacred humanity, and especially through His five wounds, I get a distinct and vivid idea of the ocean of beauty and love in His divinity.

Well, if I am resolved to avoid mortal sin, and I then think in my heart of my good God and kind Father in heaven or of my human and divine, beautiful, generous, loving Brother, is there not a strong propensity in my human nature to love heartily those who are so lovable in themselves and so loving toward me? In such cases, is not hearty disinterested love for God so easy that it is bound to be common?

We must mark well that the supposition is that we have a firm resolution to keep God's commandments from some motive less noble than that of pure love, and that we have truthfully said in our hearts not merely, "I would like to obey God," but "I have a will to obey Him with the help of His holy graces." Then, in this supposition, if we reflect how lovable and loving God is, will we not easily add: "I am resolved to obey Him *because* He who is so loving toward me is so lovable in Himself," and will I not thus be loving Him for His own sake above all things; that is, with a love above all my love for other beings?

The demons and the reprobate human spirits in hell know the infinite perfection and loveliness of God, but they hate His yoke and burden and commands, and they hate Him. Hardened and blinded sinners on earth are not ignorant of His infinite perfection or of His longing to share with themselves His own divine beatitude; but they are unwilling to obey Him and do not love Him above all things, and in some rare cases even positively hate Him.

Other sinners are not hardened or blinded but for the moment are unwilling to abstain from some forbidden fruits, and they regard God as a judge who at this moment is not propitious, but angry with themselves who spurn His mandates.

The child, or religious, or soldier who has been grievously rebellious and has been detected and disowned and cast out and has not repented and is still rebellious, may know that his superior is lovable and longs for his return and reinstatement, and he may not then have such a strong propensity to love him who is so loving and lovable. But this is not the case which we suppose. What we ask is, whether it is not easy for one who is resolved to avoid mortal sin, to love God because He is lovable, when He is known now to be propitious?

Our case is not that of the soldier who is running away from his flag and comrades and general, and who may hate his general even for being a perfect soldier and for execrating his cowardice and disloyalty. But suppose that with hope of pardon we have sorrow and detestation for all of our mortal sins with a firm purpose not to commit any mortal sin in the future, and that the motive which has thus decided us is a sense of the injustice or ingratitude or irreligion or disobedience to God which are in each sin, or is fear of the punishments which we have incurred or hope for the divine rewards which we would lose or a sense of *any* innate turpitude of sin. None of these motives is pure love for God for His own sake. But is it not natural and easy for one who is thus penetrated with any of these motives of penance also to love God for His own sake? And, as a fact, will he not frequently have the health of love after taking these medicines which prepare and dispose for this perfect health of soul?

It is rare that a soul flies straight up to pure love from the depths of sin. But suppose that as a fact it has turned away from the will to sin and has crept up on the steps of fear and shame and hope, is it not easy and common and natural, with God's graces, to climb from these beginnings of wisdom to wisdom itself? Why should we tell the great numbers that these lower steps are designed by God for them to halt on and not to mount on? Is not the soul by habitual grace and love plumed to fly with love, and are not its wings now free from fetters of sin, and what, then, impedes its soaring to actual friendship for Him who is now known to be an actual Friend, and one so unspeakably loving and rich and one infinitely lovable?

Is the belief that in such cases love for God is so natural and easy as to be common a dream of mere poetic fancy and sentiment? How, then, is it the belief of all Catholic theologians of our day, of all the great Doctors of the Church in the past, of our Blessed Lord in His commands and parables and in so many of His other sayings, which almost seem to show that all those who keep His commandments love Him, and which can scarcely be understood unless those who keep the ten commandments, generally keep also the greatest and first commandment of love for Himself for His own sake above all things?

How far we are, alas, from saintly heroism! And yet, at the same time, we may be men or women or children of ordinary good will, firmly resolved not to defile our souls with any grievous stain of sin, whether by thought, or word, or deed, or omission.

Then is it not easy and common for ourselves, who are not saints but have ordinary good will, to make the acts of love and of perfect contrition? Are they not on the first pages of the smallest catechisms? Were we not all taught them and trained to say them from earliest childhood? Wise and kind teachers do not give to all the little children lessons which the average little one will not easily learn. Tender Mother Church is tender not only in name but also in deed. She does not ask from *all* of her children anything which is a hard task such as only a few will perform. In her more important acts in directing souls, she is rightly believed to be ever assisted by a special providence. She is certainly a tender Mother at least to children of tender age, and yet what frequent acts of love she expects from them!

Our Divine Lord was certainly a good and wise Master and Teacher. And yet He prescribed the Our Father as a form of prayer for the use of each soul of the human race. And beginning with the first word, "*Pater*"—"Father," how *many* acts of love for God above all things for His own sake, are expected from him who says Our Lord's Prayer.

No created spirit on earth or in heaven ever said a more perfect prayer than "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name." And yet, can I not, when reciting these words and those which follow, mean all that I say and wish all that

I ask? Did Our Lord expect that He would have to say, about the great numbers who would follow His direction for their souls to recite the Our Father every day, or often every day, during the centuries, "this people honor Me with their lips but their hearts are far away"?

The psalms were inspired by the Holy Spirit to be daily and hourly sung to God by the voices and hearts of the priests and the people of the Jewish Synagogue and the Christian Church. They are essentially a book of "praiseful prayers and prayerful praises"<sup>1</sup> and such praises are an outbursting or overflowing of love for God above all things for His own sake. Do not the Holy Spirit and the Catholic Church suppose that these acts of love have been and are easy and common in the hearts of ordinary Jews and ordinary Christians?

All of us are taught to say the beads, and yet acts of love are expressed or supposed in the Sign of the Cross, the Credo, the Pater, the Ave, the Gloria, and in the picturing in our souls of each Joyful or Sorrowful or Glorious Mystery, and of Our Lord there lovable and loving.

We run over the pages of any approved Prayer-book or of any Sodality Manual or of the Raccolta of Indulged Prayers and Practices, or of the Missal, or of the Breviary, and we are struck by the fact that the large majority of prayers approved by the Church for all the people, or for numerous classes among the people, or for all the priests and religious, either express or suppose love for God above all things for His own sake.

Surely there is a love for God for His own sake which is not above all things, is not predominant above all illicit loves for creatures. There might be true, sincere affection for God which would not be efficient enough to move us to keep all the divine commandments, and which yet might decide and determine us to keep some of the commandments or some parts of some or of one. There might even be a sincere affection for God which would not move our will to budge toward God's will as expressed in His commandments to us. We can conceive a love, as well as a faith, without any practical good works. But if our human hearts are a soil in which pure love rarely produces abundant fruits of good works, of fulfil-

<sup>1</sup>Cheyne. *The Book of Psalms*. Introduction, p. xiii. New York, 1888.

ment of duties toward God, ourselves, our neighbor, and if most of these fruits are produced by fear of God's punishments or by hope for His rewards, or by shame for sins, etc., without love for God above all things, is it not a mistake on the part of Our Divine Lord and His Holy Spirit and His Church, in which His Holy Spirit is embodied, to be ever expecting in us the most abundant fruits to be reaped from pure love? Would it not have been their duty to caution us on the sterility and barrenness of love save in the souls of the saints, who are few?

How often we see on the pedestals of statues of the Sacred Heart or below paintings or engravings of the same, such words as these: "Son, give Me thy heart," "Behold the Heart which has so loved men," "Sacred Heart of Jesus, burning with love for me, inflame my heart with love for Thee," "Sacred Heart of Jesus, I implore, that I may ever love Thee more and more." And nowadays nearly all over the world after each low Mass the people repeat three times with the celebrant: "Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us," and after Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament, they repeat: "Blessed be God," etc. And how often we are asked to say in the more ancient liturgical prayers: "Come, O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and kindle in them the fire of Thy love," "O God, grant me an *increase* of faith, hope, and charity."

Has not the Church thus always expected and supposed love for God and for Our Lord, and does she not expect and suppose it now more than ever, and that in the hearts of the many?

Moreover, in the books of sermons or homilies written in various places of the Catholic world and in various ages of the Church's history, we read many exhortations to the multitude to love God above all things for His own sake. All of these publications have the Church's imprimatur and positive approval and all of these preachers knew the Church's mind and not a few of them were her Holy Doctors. If love were rare, then these sermons would have as their chief effect, according to the saying of St. Francis de Sales, "much noise, little fruit."

In the "Christian Perfection," of Rodriguez; the "Knowledge and Love of Our Lord Jesus Christ," by St. Jure; the



“Introduction to a Devout Life,” by St. Francis de Sales; the “Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius,” the “Confessions of St. Augustine,” the “Spiritual Combat,” the “Imitation of Christ,” the Epistles, the Psalms, the Gospels, the dominant note is charity, love for God for His own sake and love for our neighbor for God’s sake. Should we tell the many that for them the perusal of these books is almost a waste of time and strength? And yet these are the books that are the most widely read by Catholics and are the daily food of the many. Is this food such that it is rarely digested and assimilated?

Again, Christian preachers exhort their people to fraternal Christian charity even oftener than to love for God. But wherever there is true Christian love for our neighbor there is love for God above all things for His own sake.

In the act of love in the catechism, the child is taught and trained first to make the act of love for God and then to add, “I love also my neighbor as myself for the love of Thee.”

In the Our Father, before saying, “give *us* this day *our* daily bread, forgive *us* our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, lead *us* not into temptation, deliver *us* from evil”; we say, “Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be *Thy* name, *Thy* Kingdom come, *Thy* will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Here we wish and pray for good things to God before we wish and pray for good things to our neighbor and ourselves.

Moses and our Divine Lord place the greatest and first commandment of love for God before the second commandment of love for our neighbor as ourselves.

Without loving God or thinking of Him or even believing in Him, one may love his neighbor, disinterestedly, as himself, as a second self, as a friend. He may thus love a parent, a child, a husband, a wife, a more distant kinsman or kinswoman, a fellow-citizen, a fellow-soldier, a fellow-student, a fellow-traveler, a benefactor, a fellow-man merely for the sake of the person loved. Such benevolence, disinterested love, friendship, is dictated by right reason and our rational nature, the proper standard of human acts, and thus may be a morally good act, and worthy of praise. But it is only an act of humanity, philanthropy, or perhaps of some other natural virtue, such as gratitude or parental or filial piety, etc. But

the love of Christian charity toward our neighbor is immeasurably broader, higher, deeper, nobler. It regards the object of its affection as kin, not only in Adam and Eve or their descendants, but also in God and Christ and the Holy Spirit, as the creature and image and likeness of our one God and Father; as, like ourselves, one redeemed by the precious blood of the God-man, our common Brother; as one at least *called* to receive the graces of our one Holy Spirit; as one to whom our common Divine Father and Brother and Holy Spirit most earnestly wish well, most certainly earnestly desire sanctity and happiness here, and heaven hereafter in the possession of God, in the inheritance common to ourselves, our neighbor and Jesus Christ, the natural Son of God, of whom we are adopted brothers and with and through whom we are co-heirs of God, to be possessed in heaven our common home. We know that sanctification, present happiness, and eternal salvation *are* earnestly willed by God to each human being living on earth. And, loving God for His own infinite goodness and loveliness, we necessarily wish to each living fellow human being what our God and kind Father wishes to him. And this is the act of fraternal Christian charity. In the act of love for God we wish the infinite divine beatitude to God because He is in Himself infinitely perfect and deserving of it and deserving that we, His creatures, wish this good to Him. In the act of fraternal charity we wish to our neighbor the communication of the infinite divine beatitude which is wished to him by our infinitely perfect Divine Friend whom we love for Himself, for His own sake. In the act of love for God we wish a good immediately to God. In the act of fraternal charity we wish a good immediately to our neighbor. But why do we wish this good to our neighbor? Because we love God for His own sake. Why in fraternal charity have we a love of friendship toward our neighbor? It is because we have a love of friendship toward God for His own sake, and we thence love each one of His rational creatures which is capable of sharing His divine beatitude and to which He wishes to communicate it. If we have friendship for a man, on account of him we may love all those belonging to him, whether his children, or his servants or any others near and dear to him. And love for a human friend can be

so great that for the sake of this friend we love all those who are near and dear to him, even though they offend or hate us. And in fraternal charity we have this great love for our Divine Friend.

In the act of love for God or for our neighbor we are not required to be philosophers or theologians, or to go through complicated mental processes of abstractions and distinctions and divisions and explicit self-conscious analyses and refinements of our motives. But we must say in our hearts the following things, which are the substance of love for God and of love for our neighbor for God's sake:

"God is my Friend and one all worthy of my love for His own sake; and I am His friend."

"My neighbor is worthy of love for God's sake and I am my neighbor's friend *because* I am God's friend."

It is not impossible that some are willing to do or suffer some small things or many great things for their neighbor for God's sake and yet are not willing to keep all of God's commandments and avoid all mortal sin. But this is not the case which we are considering. Of course, these, while thus disposed, do not and can not love God above all things for His own sake. But we here always suppose that, from some motive inferior in nobility to that of pure love for God, the soul is resolved to keep all of the commandments, and our question is whether it is easy and common for *such* a soul also to love God above all things?

Now, as was said above, from the days of Our Lord and the apostles and following their example, Christian writers and speakers exhort not only the select few, but the many of their readers, and the masses of their hearers who crowd our churches or cathedrals, to practise genuine Christian fraternal charity, and they understand this virtue in the sense just explained. Do not such frequent exhortations to such multitudes suppose the conviction in these writers and preachers that acts of love for our neighbor for the sake of God, loved above all things, are easy and common?

Civilization is a vague term, but all writers grant that brotherly love is its paramount element. Neither airships nor wireless telegraphy nor all other modern discoveries or inventions which may tend to improve material conditions,

can be compared with the spirit of brotherly love as a factor in truly refining, humanizing, and civilizing the human race. And this spirit is becoming more and more the avowed standard of the laws and usages of nations, even where Christ was never recognized and even where governments aim to take faith in God and Christ out of the people's mind and heart and life. The diffusion of this spirit is chiefly due to Christianity, and this is a glory which its greatest enemies do not and can not refuse to render it. Many a scoffer who still holds on to principles of true fraternity and equality still reveres his parents and grandparents, who believed in Christianity and cherished all its teachings. And if he is candid with himself he thanks Christianity, which gave him through his ancestors all that he has left of Christian moral principles.

But our question here is not about those who try to convince themselves that there is no God, who created each one of us out of nothing to His own image and likeness, that we might know Him and love Him and serve Him in this life and be forever happy with Him in the next. Nor is it exclusively about those who refuse to believe that there are three Persons in one God and that the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity for us men and for our salvation became man and died on the cross. It is at least chiefly about those who have been instructed and trained in the Sign of the Cross and in the Credo, Pater, Ave, and Gloria, and in the greatest and first commandment, and in the second, which is like to it, and in morning prayers such as this: "Adorable Jesus, Divine Model of that perfection to which we should all aspire, I will endeavor this day to follow Thy example, to be mild, humble, chaste, zealous, patient, charitable, and resigned. I will take care of my ways, that I may not offend Thee with my tongue; I will turn away my eyes, that they may not see vanity; and I will be particularly attentive not to relapse this day into my accustomed failings, but to struggle against them with Thy gracious assistance. Enlighten my mind, purify my heart, and guide my steps, that I may pass all my life in Thy divine service." We say, our question is chiefly about souls who have been instructed and trained in these ideals and practices and are resolved to avoid all mortal sin.

Now, among such souls many give their mite or their thou-

sands to aid their neighbor. Not a few give much of their time and strength, and some give all their substance and their whole life to the same cause. Many fathers and mothers live almost solely for their children, whom they rightly regard as God's children more than their own. Numbers devote themselves to the service of babes, the aged, the ignorant, the outcast, the infirm or sinful of every class to which Our Lord was specially kind. Few of these are saints, and yet our preachers expect them, whether they give a cup of cold water or exile themselves for life on the isle of lepers, to do good to others from love for God and Our Lord Jesus Christ for their own sake and above all things. Should the preachers tell these that as they are not saints they rarely can have such a motive; that they must not expect on the last day to hear Our Lord say to themselves, "When you did such things for the least of these, you did them for Me"? Or rather have they not been right in supposing that those kindnesses are Christian charity and spring from love for God and Christ above all things for their own sakes and that such love is so easy as to be common in the hearts of the many?

The greatest and first commandment is to love God above all things for His own sake. It is recorded in Deuteronomy and in the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke and in the Epistles. It is published by Moses and by Our Divine Lord and by the apostles. But it was promulgated in paradise for the first man and woman by the fact that God, who made them male and female, made them to His own image and likeness, with a mind and a will given to know and love Him. It is positive, supernatural, revealed divine law to love God as known by revelation and faith. But it is a dictate of reason and *natural* divine law to love God as known by reason. Each child is bound, under pain of mortal sin, to make an act of love for God, and that, as early in his life as to receive the sacrament of love. God imposed this yoke, burden, command on the conscience of each member of the human race for all the centuries from its first creation to the last judgment. "He does not command impossibilities, but by commanding admonishes us to do what we are able, and to ask for what we are not able, and He aids us so that we may be able." This is a fundamental maxim of Christianity.

It is thus worded by St. Augustine, the Doctor of Grace, and is adopted as its own by the Church in the decree of the Council of Trent and in many other infallible pronouncements.

Not only does God not command impossibilities, but Our Divine Lord tells us that His yoke is sweet and His burden light; and the disciple whom Jesus loved tells us Our Lord's commands are not heavy. He means by these words that no one of the commands of Our Lord is heavy, too great a weight for our souls to bear easily. And if the duty to love God above all things is so hard as to be rarely fulfilled except by the few saints, how explain these words of Our Lord and St. John and many other similar phrases of the Holy Scriptures? Our Lord knew what would be the ignorance and weakness of the vast majority of us, and yet, as has been said, He tells us that no one of His commands is heavy for any one of us.

But do we not need supernatural strength of soul to love God above all things for His own sake? To love Him supernaturally, certainly. But since the command is common, the graces to fulfil it are also common. And as we will see, the graces to love God are given to each soul not only sufficiently but abundantly.

Since the institution of the Christian sacraments, with their actual reception, attrition may be a sufficient disposition for receiving the grace which remits sin. But, before their institution, an act of perfect contrition or an act of perfect love was required in each adult who had attained the use of reason. And either the one or the other ever has been and ever will be required in each adult who is not in the state of grace and who does not actually receive a Christian sacrament. What a vast majority of the human race are ignorant of the necessity of receiving the sacraments! How many who know the necessity live or die far away from any priest without any fault of their own! Both before and since the coming of Our Lord, for the many the only plank of salvation from sin and damnation was an act of love or perfect contrition. This was and is the only plank provided for them by God, who infinitely loves His only Son, who, in turn, shed the last drop of His most precious blood that each human soul might be saved. Is this plank, thus made necessary by God, so slippery that only a few seize and hold it and are saved from the deluge

of sin? Are baptism of desire and penance of desire—desires which have the chief effects of actual baptism and penance—are they rare save in the hearts of saints, or are they not common among those resolved so to keep all of God's commandments as to avoid mortal sin?

In all the Scriptures do we find one case of a soul that had turned away from sin and that was not justified before God? And yet, as we know, it could not be thus justified without an act of love or of perfect contrition. Does not this fact, recorded in the Word of God, suppose that in those who have turned away from sin there is generally an act of love or of perfect contrition, and that even before the coming of Our Lord these acts were not so hard as to be rare, but were so easy as to be common? And since His coming, the knowledge of divine lovingness and goodness is easier. Interior graces and means to obtain them are far more abundant; examples of ordinary and extraordinary souls who practised true charity and attract us to imitation are far more numerous. If, then, love and contrition were so easy and common before, why should we not suppose that they are far more easy and common now?

The following is the formula of the Act of Faith in our catechisms: "O my God, I firmly believe all the sacred truths which Thy Holy Catholic Church believes and teaches because Thou hast revealed them, who canst neither deceive nor be deceived." To find out whether a sacred truth has been revealed by God, the Catholic first asks what the Church believes and teaches. Now, we will place under the reader's eyes some short and clear texts showing that the theologians of our day unanimously teach that acts of love and of perfect contrition are so easy as to be common among ordinary souls. How, then, is this not a sacred truth, since it is taught as such to every candidate for the priesthood with the approbation of the Sovereign Pontiff and the whole episcopate?

As the reader has noted, we have insisted that love for God is easy for one resolved to avoid *mortal* sin. Venial sin is that which of itself does not break our friendship toward God or His friendship toward us. Can we have the will to commit venial sin and at the same time love God above all things for His own sake, or have perfect contrition which blots

out sin without the actual reception of a Christian sacrament? Yes, most certainly, and we will devote special chapters to explaining this answer, which is the teaching of Catholic theologians.

Can we love God with all our powers or strength, and at the same time have involuntary inclinations to evil? On earth, yes; in heaven, no; or, rather, there we will have no evil inclinations.

Can we have all that is required for the substance of love for God above all things for His own sake and at the same time have no sensible consolations? Yes, and many think that they have not the substance of divine love when they have it and even have it in a high degree of intensity. The act of love for God is not in the senses. He is not known by the senses, but by the intelligence, by natural reason and supernatural faith; and He is loved by an act of the will corresponding to these acts of the intelligence. And the acts of the will, our likes and dislikes, are hard for us to weigh and measure, so that many love God who think and say that they do not.

Can he who fears God's punishments, love Him? Why not? Children who know that their father or mother will punish them if they are bad, may still love these parents, especially when these same children are resolved to be good.

Can he who hopes for divine rewards love God? Most assuredly. Hope is not love. Neither the motives of hope nor the objects hoped for are the same as the motive of love or the object loved. In love, both the motive and the object loved are God as He is in Himself, infinitely good. But hope is a necessary stimulus to love for God, and the more we hope the more we will love, and the more we love the more we will hope for, and the less we will fear divine punishments. Love for God is a love of friendship, and friendship is mutual, two-sided, in it a friend is a friend to a friend. God's lovingness toward me and His will to communicate to me His own divine beatitude is a necessary condition or foundation of my love of friendship for Him. Unless I know He *is* my friend I can not love him *as* my friend. His lovingness toward me is the condition or foundation of my love for Him, but not the motive, that which finally moves me to love Him with the pure



love of charity. This motive is not what my friend does, or has done, or will do; but what he *is*, and the motive of my love of charity toward God is nothing but God Himself, God infinitely good and worthy of all love.

As we thus see, *this* love for God is even inconceivable without hope in Him and for Him. Why, then, should any one say that he who hopes in God and for God, can not at the same time love Him? Why should any one say that the son who hopes for a rich inheritance from his father's love, can not, while hoping, also love his father as known to be not only loving but also lovable?

In heaven, faith gives way to sight and hope to fruition, but love for God for what He is, is the same as here on earth, the same in kind, though not in intensity. But here, on the road to heaven, there can be no hope without faith, and no love for God as a friend without both faith and hope. And the Church is ever careful to teach and train us to say the acts of faith and hope before saying the acts of love and contrition.

This chapter is an outline of the chief reasons and explanations which will be brought forward to show that acts of love and of perfect contrition are so easy as to be common among ordinary souls. It is also an outline of the answers to difficulties and objections which, in the course of such a study, spring up in some minds against the truth of the proposition or the strength of the proofs. In speeches and sermons such a recapitulation is usually reserved for the end or peroration. In sound treatises on the art of persuasion the orator is warned that if in his exordium, or opening, he discloses all that he intends to say in the body of the discourse, he thereby sacrifices the charm of novelty, suspense, and interest. The writer of a play or romance is likewise warned not to unravel his plot till the end. However, writers of meditations love great headlines summarizing the points, as do also writers of legal briefs.

This book is a *study* which gladly sacrifices every other charm to perspicuity and precision. Here the reader will be helped to study out quietly and thoroughly and sift and solve this question for himself and completely satisfy his own intelligence. And the writer has thought it well to follow the

method of the tutor in geometry, or of the judge when making a lengthy charge to the jury, or of the director who is alone with one retreatant, and begins by giving all the heads or points to be considered in a meditation. However, the writer does not pledge himself strictly to follow in the body of the book the whole order of the matters as just presented in these initial musings.

## CHAPTER II

### THE MATTER AND METHOD OF THIS STUDY SHOW THAT IT IS EASY FOR ANY READER

**T**HIS book is not, and does not pretend to be, a full treatise on the vast and deep subjects of love for God and perfect contrition. The human race happily already possesses many classics on these great subjects, and as far as we know, there is not one of these masterpieces that does not teach that acts of love and of perfect contrition are so easy as to be common. However, not a single one of them treats our *practical question* with any degree of fulness. Was it that to authors who were geniuses this question seemed in itself easier and clearer than it can be made by lengthy reasons and explanations? Or was it that in their day the minds of readers had not yet been tainted by the errors which have since bewildered and paralyzed souls and impeded them in the practice of love for God and of perfect contrition? We have searched all the libraries to which we have had access, and have consulted many well-read American and European scholars. And as far as we have been able to learn, no writer so far has had the thought and taken the pains to show us the various sides of this practical truth.

Some reader may ask, is not this a question too hard for me to sift and solve for myself? And the writer answers by an emphatic *no*, and pledges himself not only to make its truth plain by reasons and explanations which all readers can grasp, and to dissipate all reasonable doubts from the mind of each individual who will give him a fair and kind hearing, but also to make its truth *manifest* by demonstrations that will dissipate *all* doubts or hesitations. If he promised less he would not be ingenuous; for he would be hiding some of his confidence in the strength of his cause and its evident truth.

Thus, as the reader has observed, he will not need to master the whole treatise on the love of God and perfect contrition, but will be asked to study only one chapter of this treatise.

Moreover, this is not one of the questions on which

Catholic philosophers or theologians are divided. And questions on which these all agree can be easily mastered with ordinary intelligence and diligence. As we can not too often remind the reader, our proposition does not *oppose* a single Catholic theologian of our day, but only *follows* the unanimous outspoken teaching of them all. Neither does it oppose the teaching of a single Father or Doctor of the Church. And a Catholic writer could not even *think* of opposing any decree of the Councils or of the Holy See. Perhaps there have arisen and been condemned, around our question, more errors than around any other. And we will ask the reader to have the patience to peruse with us the texts of these various decisions. Nothing else throws so much light on our question. Nearly every one of these errors, if accepted, would make it impossible or hard to love God, and nearly every one of the Church's oracles of truth on this point makes for the easiness and commonness of love for God. After we have perused these texts together, the writer will explain them to the reader as a private tutor does to his pupil.

As the reader has noted, we have repeatedly asserted that what we are proving is that acts of love and of perfect contrition are easy and common among souls who are resolved to avoid *mortal* sin. *There are countless degrees in love for God.* God alone loves Himself with a love which is absolutely perfect. No creature can know all the divine goodness with absolute perfection. We might sail over all the oceans and seas and survey them as a whole and yet not know them wholly. We might not have sounded all of their depths or scanned all of their inhabitants or caves or gems. And if we had, would we know *everything* about even one drop of their waters? We may see the whole sun with a powerful telescope, but how far are the greatest scientists from knowing all of the forces or beauties of even one sun-ray! In heaven all the blessed see God's beauty face to face, but how far are the seraphim and Mary and even the Humanity of our Divine Lord, which sits at the right hand of God, from knowing the Infinite infinitely! There is no love for that which is not known. And since a creature can not know perfectly all the divine beauty, neither can it love this beauty with absolute perfection.

In our Father's heavenly house there are many mansions. In the spiritual firmament one is the glory of the sun, and another that of the moon, and star differeth from star in glory. Each spirit there is a mirror reflecting God's beauty according to its capacity; each is a precious gem like a diamond or ruby, sparkling with the divine glory according to its kind and size. Each is saturated with delights according to its powers of receiving them. God painted the hues and tints of the flowers and the rainbow. He gave their odors to the rose and the violet, and He taught the birds and the angels to sing, and eye hath not seen and ear hath not heard nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the good things He hath prepared in heaven for those who love Him and keep His commandments. And He hath prepared more for those who have loved Him more and kept His commandments more perfectly. Blessed are all the dead who have died in the Lord, for not only do they rest from their labors but their works follow them. They have, each one of them, been judged according to their works, and some have done and suffered less for Him and some more, and these last now have more knowledge of God and more love for Him and more of the joy coming from such greater possession of God by greater knowledge and love.

Observing due proportions, we must apply also to risen and *glorified bodies* what has been just said of beatified souls. I believe in the resurrection of the body, and this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must be clothed with immortality. My soul is essentially immortal. God was free to create it or not to create it. But once He decreed to draw it out of nothing, He was obliged by His own goodness and wisdom and justice to weave immortality into its inmost essence. The materials and the form of the pyramids manifest that their builders designed them to endure for ages. And the substance and nature of my soul manifest that its Maker intended it to last even though the stars should fall and as long as God is God. Our bodies are matter, extended, have parts beyond parts which can be dissolved. My soul is a simple substance which has no parts and can not perish by dissolution. And neither *will* it be annihilated. It depends here on bodily senses as windows for the entrance of the light of

knowledge. But it can know right and wrong and many other things which are not the object of sight or hearing or taste or touch. It is a spirit and is capable of life and action after separation from the body and its organs of sensation. There is one God the Father Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And He is all mighty and all wise and all just and all good and rules the universe. Here it often happens that the wicked prosper and the good are oppressed. Then His providence must have in store another and a better life, where He will manifest that He is not indifferent to vice and to virtue here among His subjects and where He will distribute rewards adequate to the merits of each.

From looking at the soul and God we also see this future life must be *eternal*. We see in each human heart a longing for perfect happiness. This hunger and thirst are as necessary in us as gravitation to the earth's center is in the stone, as the tendency to the north pole is in the magnetic needle. Solomon, with his wealth and knowledge and power and glory, cried out in anguish, "Vanity of vanities and all is vanity and affliction of spirit." Says St. Augustine, "Thou hast made me for Thyself, O Lord, and my heart can not be at rest save in Thee." Our intelligence knows of the infinite good which alone can fill the infinite capacity of our spirit.

Even though we possessed God, if we knew that there were a possibility of losing Him, we would be all the unhappier for possessing Him. We would be like Damocles, seated on the king's throne, clothed in purple and crowned with the diadem and feasting at the royal board, when he looked up and saw the sharp sword hanging by a hair and ready to fall on his neck. The good God has planted in our nature this craving for the possession of the infinite good for eternity. And if He had not prepared its eternal possession for us, He would have given us this craving, impossible to satisfy, only to torture us, and He would not be good and He would not be truthful either; as He would have made us an implicit promise which He does not intend to fulfil.

So that, as we see from the nature of our soul and of God, our souls are essentially immortal.

But our bodies are naturally mortal. By a supernatural

gift God created Adam immortal. But, by the envy of the devil, sin entered into the world and with sin death. It was only after the sin of our first representative that God pronounced on him and each one of his race the direful sentence: "Thou shalt die the death!" But as in Adam all die, so in Christ all shall be made alive. The human body, the most perfect and beautiful of all things visible, the instrument and companion of the soul in the race and battle of life, will not be consigned to the eternal common oblivion of the brutes that die and perish forever.

It is destined to share with the soul, which has fought the good fight and completed its course and kept the faith, the crown of justice laid up for it by the Just Judge. The soul in the body is one person, one individual, one responsible principle of action, it is one temple of God planned, built, adorned, dedicated, consecrated as God's beautiful house and the place where His glory dwelleth. Each sacrament or visible sign instituted by Christ to signify and give invisible grace, was instituted to sanctify not only the soul with its spiritual faculties of understanding, memory, and will but also the body with all its members, which the soul animates. This is true of each one of the seven sacraments, and it is most strikingly true of the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord. Our Lord, speaking of the temple of His body, said to His enemies: "Dissolve this temple and after three days I will rebuild it." And He instituted the Eucharist as the bread of life not only for the soul but also for the body. "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me and I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me. Not as your fathers ate manna and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live forever. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

By the Eucharist He makes us more perfect friends of His. He wept at the tomb of Lazarus, the friend whom He loved, so that the Jews exclaimed: "Behold, how He loved His friend"; and to him who had been four days dead He cried out with a loud voice: "Lazarus, come forth!" And He not only sanctifies our souls by the sacrament of love, but, having

permitted the temples of our bodies to be dissolved in death, He will rebuild them on the last day.

He has power to raise plants and trees from the seed buried and decayed in the earth. He was able to breathe the breath of life into the slime of the earth. He permits the leaves and flowers to die in the fall, and in the spring He sheds life and beauty over garden, field, and forest. He permits the sun to set in the west at eve, but He makes it to rise in the east in the morn. He died and raised Himself to life. I will die and He will raise me up to life. "I know that my Redeemer liveth and that on the last day I shall rise again out of the earth and in my flesh I shall see my God, whom I myself shall see and my eyes shall behold. I and not another. This my hope is laid up in my bosom."

Whereas sin abounded in Adam, grace hath abounded more in Christ; and on the last day, at the sound of the archangel's trumpet heralding through the four corners of the earth the divine summons, "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment"—the sin and death of Adam will be swallowed up in the perfect victory of Christ; and, looking back at our tombs and dust and ashes, we will, as we trust, arise triumphant and exclaim, "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" And in our risen bodies, become incorruptible, impassible, spiritualized and brilliant with glorious beauty, we will see God and Our Lord and His Mother and His angels and His saints. And we will not be dazzled, as were the children of Israel at the sight of Moses coming down from the Mount from the vision of God; when his face, radiant with the effulgence of divine glory, had to be covered with a veil from the eyes of the stunned multitude. And we will not fall as if dead, like Peter, James, and John taken up on the high mount apart into the cloud of light and hearing the voice from the cloud, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him," and seeing, between Moses and Elias, Jesus transfigured before them and His face like lightning and His raiment as snow, when Peter exclaimed, "O Lord, it is good, it is sweet, for us to be here!" No, the visual powers of our soul and our body will be strengthened by the divine infusion of the light of glory so that like the eagle we will delight in fixedly gazing at the Orient on High.



And as in blessed souls, so in glorified bodies there will be a marvelous variety in the kinds and degrees of knowledge and love for God. In each for eternity the present love of fruition will be proportionate to its own past love of longing in the time of probation on earth. Each will there love God perfectly, not as God loves Himself, but with all its heart, soul, strength, and mind, with all the intensity of love of which each is capable.

Each will cry out truly, "My heart and my flesh have exulted in the living God." And in each, these acts of love will be absolutely unceasing for all eternity.

But what has all this description of the love of God for Himself, and of the love for God among the blessed in heaven before and after the resurrection, to do with our present study of the love for God on earth among souls resolved to avoid mortal sin? This description has been introduced to impress the reader with the ease with which he may be able quietly and thoroughly to sift and solve our practical question for himself. How difficult would be the thorough study of the love for God in heaven. And yet how easy may be the thorough study of the love for God on earth, or, rather, of the lowest degree of this love on earth, or, more precisely, of one question about this lowest degree!

For, not only at the terminus in the fatherland, but also *in the journeying on the way there are many degrees of love for God.*

On Thabor, Peter, James, and John saw the glory of their transfigured Lord. And they received extraordinary lights of soul as well as of the senses, and there were in these apostles affections corresponding to those extraordinary spiritual enlightenments. St. Paul was rapt to the third heaven and heard words which it is unlawful for man to speak and loved God most extraordinarily and said, "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me." And not a few of the saints also received from God a knowledge about His goodness as miraculous as the knowledge of a prophet about future free events, and with this knowledge there arose in their souls an equally singular love for God.

This was the love of the *mystic state*, in the strict technical sense of that term. But we mention this subject only to

emphasize the fact that such is not the matter of our study. And if mystical theology is hard to master, the study of our every-day question may still be easy. If we recoil from the study of miraculous movements of the eagle not only above the highest mountain peaks but also above the earth's atmosphere, we may still dare to undertake the study of the movements of men walking or creeping in the lowly valley.

A soul may see two ways open before it, each good and lawful and pleasing to God, but one better and more pleasing, more ennobling to the soul itself, more useful to our neighbor, more full of honor for God, a good more immediate or universal. And it may choose this better way purely because God is infinitely good in Himself and worthy of this generosity of love.

This election may refer to a momentary act or to a permanent state of life, such as the choice between the state of holy marriage or that of holier celibacy, wherein a virgin would choose, as the immediate chief care of her life, to obey and please God instead of the care to obey and please a man. Again, there might be a choice between two actions, one of them lawful and the other venially sinful. Or, finally, there might be question of choosing between what is mortally sinful and what is not.

And a soul may be moved by love for God not only to choose what is more perfect or what is not venially sinful, but even when it chooses what is less perfect or what is venially sinful but draws the line at grievous or mortal sin, and shrinks from that, because it grievously displeases God, who is all good and worthy of our friendship, which is violated by mortal sin.

We will explain at full length in a special chapter that this last and lowest degree has all the essentials or substantial of the virtue of charity or true friendship of man for God. The study of the former or higher degrees might have special difficulties, but they are not the subjects of our present study.

As nowadays all comprehend the truth that it is easy for all and even for little children to have the substance of the dispositions absolutely sufficient for making a worthy and fruitful communion, may not all likewise be readily brought to comprehend that it is easy for all and even for little chil-

dren to have the substance of the dispositions absolutely sufficient for making an act of love for God above all things for His own sake? What must have been the dispositions before communion of St. John, the virgin apostle, who at the Last Supper reposed on the bosom of Jesus; of St. Stanislaus, who was worthy to have the bread of angels brought to him by the hands of angels; of St. Aloysius, who from one end of the year to the other was distracted in time of prayer only for the space required for one Credo! How difficult might be the study of dispositions for communions such as theirs! And yet how easy is the study of freedom from mortal sin and of an upright intention, which, according to the Holy Father, are sufficient dispositions for daily communion even without the resolution to avoid venial sins. And, likewise, how easy the study of the minimum required for an act of love for God above all things for His own sake.

Therefore, considering the matter of the present study, we see that this is a question which each one may easily sift and solve for himself. For, as has been said, this study does not embrace the whole treatise on love for God, but only one chapter. And the love to be considered is not that of heaven but that of earth. And it is not that of the mystic state, which God gives to the few, but is that founded on such knowledge of God's goodness as can be attained by all that try. And the love here treated is not that which follows the divine inspirations or counsels, but the commandments, and it follows the commandments not so as to shun venial but only mortal sin.

Indeed, without doubt, love for God which determines souls to do what is more pleasing to God or to shun venial sin—such acts, we say, are most common among men and women and children around us. But this is not what we are here and now studying, but only the question whether it is easy and common, with the aid of the divine graces, to be resolved to avoid mortal sin because it displeases God, who is all good and worthy of our love.

To borrow the happy phrase used in a brief conversation with us by a learned Dominican friend, we are here treating not of *perfect acts* of love or contrition, but of acts of *perfect love* or *contrition*, not of acts of the greatest intensity or fre-

quency, but of acts which may be less intense or less frequent and yet have all that is needed for them to be in the species, kind, class of acts of perfect love or contrition as distinguished from acts of interested love and of attrition or imperfect contrition.

And therefore this study is manifestly easy by reason of its matter.

But our reader may press his objections and urge: "Yes, this may be an easy matter for a trained theologian or philosopher, but I am neither the one nor the other. And, indeed, I have never given any study or even much thought either to this question or to any one like it. What, then, is the method by which you hope to help me, as you say, to quietly and thoroughly sift and solve this question for myself?"

Our method will be that of the painstaking judge. All of us may have read in the daily papers accounts of murder trials. Many of them may have involved complicated questions of law and evidence, and perhaps also of chemistry or psychology or other sciences. And these questions, so difficult in themselves, were often made more obscure by at least apparently conflicting representations of experts, witnesses of facts, and contending advocates. We followed the course of the legal proceedings as reported in the daily papers and yet we could not make up our minds as to the guilt or innocence of the accused, although we ourselves may have been experts in law or in the other sciences affecting the case.

The jury, let us suppose, consisted of twelve farmers, and, after being out a short while to deliberate, they brought in a verdict of guilty of murder in the first degree and the judge sentenced the accused to death, and the sentence was confirmed as just by the unanimous opinion of the judges of the court of final resort. How was it that these twelve farmers could thus know with certainty this matter about which experts remained in doubt? It was that we had not read all the record of the testimonies of the witnesses and especially that our papers had not reported to us in full the charge of the judge. As we may have afterwards learned, on inquiry from one of the members of the bar who had been a spectator of the trial from its beginning to its end, his honor summarily brushed aside as irrelevant the great mass of testimonies

adduced by the prosecution and defense and perhaps brought the whole question down to whether one or two of the chief witnesses were truthful or not. Each of the opposing advocates, perhaps without making one false assertion of a fact, had told only those facts which seemed to help his own side and in this each had done only what he was paid and bound to do, and was in no way to be blamed for such fidelity to his office and to his client.

If there had been clamor among the people against the accused, it is possible that the reporters selected for publication only such parts of the testimony as would please readers and entice them to buy the newspaper. But his honor, as in duty bound, endeavored to narrate the facts as a judicial historian and to tell the whole truth as far as proven by witnesses. Moreover, his summary of the laws bearing on the case was likewise the whole truth and not merely one side of it and it was couched for the most part in untechnical words of one or two syllables.

The writer has for many years officiated as moderator of the theological conferences of the Archdiocese of New York and has had long practice in presiding over theological discussions of the clergy and nearly every point in this book has been the subject of a paper read at some of these meetings. He has given much time to perusing works which might treat our question, and has spared the reader the trouble of reading things which are irrelevant. And he assures the reader that in this case he has been a painstaking judge.

Widely scattered here and there are many sayings pertaining to our question. We have found them in texts of the Old or New Testaments, and in writings of Fathers, and in decrees of Popes and Councils, and in prayers of approved liturgies, and in authorized catechisms, and in standard theological works ranging in size and age from antique ponderous folio tomes to modern duodecimo leaflets.

Many of these scattered fragments of truth have been gleaned and gathered and arranged in an order more or less regular and have been digested and analyzed and thus placed all together under the reader's eye, so that his mind can take them all in at one view or glance and test their value and mutual bearing. Technical, philosophical, or theological Latin

terms have been turned into every-day homely English. What was implicit has been made explicit. Hard sayings have been made easy as far as the matter has permitted. Truths clothed in metaphors or other figures have been stripped of their rhetoric and expressed in language that is literal, and have been spread out before the eye and mind, uncovered and unfolded. Lights collected from sources widely varying in nature, age, and locality, have been focussed on our one point. Our proposition has thus been made manifest as a truth illumined and visible by the light of many other known truths, as a conclusion clearly and closely following from well-known premises. Indeed, our proposition has been found in some verses of the Scriptures as taught in express terms and has thus been seen to be true without the aid of any arguing, even the most elementary.

The reader need not fear that he will be asked to participate in any animosities of philosophical or theological controversy—the “*odium theologicum*” of scholasticism—since there can not be question of much domestic attacking or defending when we are *following* in our proposition the unanimous teaching of Catholic theologians. The only merit we claim is that perhaps we are the first who ever both had the thought and took the pains to put together as a whole, things which many have said before us, and to draw legitimate conclusions from them, and to bring them out of the lecture-halls of the seminary or university and place them within the mental reach of all.

For this book is not addressed to the saint of the mystic state who has been favored with lights somewhat like those of St. Paul when he was rapt to the third heaven, since the degree of love of which it treats is that which is common among ordinary Christians who can practise it easily and understand it much more easily.

Neither is the work addressed exclusively to theological students or specialists. Every member of this truly noble intellectual aristocracy now cordially accepts the proposition which we demonstrate, and each one of our reasons and explanations is stated with a moderation which expects and welcomes their keen and learned scrutiny. And how glad we would be if what we write would lead to a wide, thorough,

public discussion which would with finality bring out the whole truth on this practical point, which so deeply concerns every member of the human race who has a soul to sanctify and save.

What a joy if our words here would awaken some mute modern Francis de Sales or Rodriguez to put the finishing touches to what we have begun and sketched, and to use his gifts of thorough knowledge of theology and of strength and grace of style, to bring our truth down home to the minds and hearts and lives of the millions! Although not addressed exclusively to this class, this book may interest them especially. It calls their attention to some passages in the Scriptures, Fathers, Councils, and Doctors which they perhaps have repeatedly read, but the force of which they may not have pondered and which they have never before seen placed together in one panorama.

Those whom we have had most specially in mind in each step of our study are parents, hard-worked Pastors, Brothers, Sisters, and all other teachers of catechism.

We will often have to state truths which are in the smallest catechisms. They might have been forgotten by some of our readers and at any rate some of our proofs or explanations are based on them and could not be fully appreciated without our recalling these rudiments and stating them with precision. We will often even repeat these rudiments.

This book is a study and aims only at convincing the intelligence that love for God and perfect contrition are easy to practise, and not at persuading the will or at exhorting to the practice of these acts. However, as the lovableness and lovingness of God and of Our Lord Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit will be here constantly placed before the mind, and as the intelligence will be convinced that it is easy to love them above all things for their own sake, and will see that millions around us and like us give us the example of divine charity, many may be persuaded by this book to begin to actually practise the greatest of all the virtues, or to make its practice the chief aim of their life. However, this is not our immediate aim and we should not be expected to take or sustain the style and tone of exhortation. Our book is only a catechetical chat and will now and then claim the right to intro-

duce homely phrases or illustrations which would be out of place in a theological lecture or a cathedral conference or a parish homily, or even in an instruction given to a class of children in the house of God and in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

And we beg our readers not to fancy that they would need to bring to our judicial summing up of this case either the brilliant genius of an Augustine, or the erudition of a Jerome, or the penetration of an Angel of the Schools, or the extraordinary learning and judicial prudence of an Alphonsus, or the singular knowledge of the divine nature and of human nature of a Francis de Sales—that ideal wit and scholar and man of the world and Christian gentleman—or the individual experience which these holy Doctors, in common with all the saints, possessed of a high degree of love for God, or even the ordinary interior experiences of the multitude of pious souls.

Without being Marshalls or Storys, our twelve honest farmers were amply equipped for understanding elements of law on what murder is and on what is the value of this or that evidence to prove that here was murder wilful, deliberate, premeditated, malicious. And our teachers of catechism, without being Doctors of the Church or fit subjects for canonization, with their ordinary good judgment and knowledge of the value of homely English words, are also amply equipped for understanding the elements of God's law on love for Him and on perfect contrition for our sins and on the value of the testimonies of God and His Church adduced to prove that here on earth the existence of such love and contrition in millions of human hearts has been and is a fact.

Many non-Catholic personal friends have told us that they are eager to hear what we have to say in this plea in defense of our one good Lord's mercy and plentiful redemption. Some explanations are necessary for some of these kind hearers which may be tedious to Catholic teachers of catechism, but the judge is not blamed for accommodating himself to the mind of each member of the jury.





## CHAPTER III

### *THE CATHOLIC THEOLOGIANS OF OUR DAY ARE UNANIMOUS, OUTSPOKEN AND POSITIVE IN TEACHING THAT ACTS OF LOVE AND PERFECT CONTRITION ARE EASY AND COMMON*

THE above proposition states as a fact that Catholic theologians teach this and in this manner. In the present chapter the reader will see this fact with his own eyes in a number of short and clear texts with a few brief explanations.

In recent years many beautiful booklets have been printed showing that acts of love and perfect contrition are easy and common. The writer had begun his study of the question before seeing any of these. In order fully to satisfy his own mind as to the sense of the Church on this point, in his search for truth the first thing he did was to thumb the books of all the theologians and especially of those of our day, to which he had access. What was his joy, after making this collection of extracts, to see their outspoken positive unanimity! This was enough to satisfy his mind, and he thought it would be enough to drive away every fear of mistake from other minds, too, and lead them to the secure rest of their intelligence in full assent to know the truth. His first plan was to rest his whole case on this authority of the theologians of our day. However, he repeatedly reperused these texts and noted their citations from the Scriptures and the Fathers and the Doctors and the Popes and the Councils and the Roman Congregations and also the theological reasons on which the theologians base their conviction that perfect love and contrition are easy and common.

From the authority of the theologians as exponents of the sense of the Church, his intelligence had clung to this known truth with firm assent. But it clung still more closely and with a firmer assent from each new cogent reason. Considering that other minds would be affected like his own by these reasons, he thought well to make a study of them and of

others besides, and to present the results of this study to the public.

With such a host behind him and the rock of truth behind them, he felt no fear of any of the foes before him. The reader has already seen who these foes are. They are chiefly Calvinism, Lutheranism, Jansenism, Quietism, Agnosticism, and ultra antagonism of some short-sighted Catholic writers to those anti-Catholic Isms. Puritanism is common to each one of these systems and nearly all eyes are now open to its absurdity. It is the only philosophy or religion known to many. Not a few have consciously or subconsciously argued: Puritanism is absurd. But it is the only philosophy or religion. Therefore all philosophy and all religion are absurd. In this study we not only grant but show that Puritanism is absurd and leads to desperation. However, we deny that it is the only philosophy or religion, and we present the Catholic system as one which is true and consoling and one in which not only faith and hope but also charity may be easy and common. We trust by this method to uproot from many minds the false and pernicious cant that all philosophy and religion are absurd.

But to come to the thread of the argument in this chapter. Before considering the proof of the fact of such teaching, we will briefly explain how this fact, when proved, proves the truth of the proposition that acts of love and contrition are easy and common.

A theological book written by a Catholic is first carefully perused and scrutinized by a learned and prudent official of the bishop called the "Censor of Books." And before it can be published, this official must write to the bishop that the book contains nothing which is against faith or morals, or which is likely to be against the good of souls at the time and place of the proposed publication. Then the bishop, after receiving this "*nihil obstat*," may give his leave to print—grant his "*imprimatur*." The theological book is then published, and taken up by heads of Catholic seminaries or universities, and placed in the hands of the students who are to be pastors, professors, or bishops in the future, and it is also diffused among the working clergy. In parenthesis, we observe that such books aim at the same precision as the little

or big catechisms, but go much further on each point, whether in stating or defining or applying or proving it. They aim at much greater precision than do books of devotion, or sermons, or controversies, addressed to the people. The latter books largely aim, and should aim, at pleasing the imagination and moving the feelings, and thus swaying the will to do right; while theological books aim solely at instructing and convincing the intelligence. The average knowledge and training exacted for entrance into the classes of Catholic theology are greater than those required for matriculation in the schools of medicine or law. And the scholastic method of rigid definition, division and proof, and of answer to difficulties and objections, followed in all of our schools of theology, requires that every word of a theological book should have been weighed with special care.

Well, suppose that such a book has been published. So far there is no guarantee sufficient to convince all Catholics that everything in the book is true and good. But there is only the judgment of local Catholic officials that there is nothing in it false or bad. But suppose that all such contemporary books agree on some one point, as clearly following from truths revealed by God and taught by the Church, and that they express their agreement, not in groping terms of doubting opinion, but in positive terms of certainty, stigmatizing the opposite doctrine as false and pernicious and as emanating from enemies of the truth and of the true good of souls. And suppose that the matter of this point of doctrine is not mere speculative theory, but closely pertains to the every-day practice of the masses of the faithful. And suppose further, that, through one hundred thousand or fifty thousand copies of the one book, and forty thousand of another, and thirty or twenty or ten or five thousand copies of others, the minds of the priests and bishops who had studied them in youth and reviewed and pondered and applied them in maturer age, have become imbued with this belief, and that they have spread it by means of oral sermons or printed articles through the dioceses of all the continents where the Catholic Church has taken root and grown. And suppose that the spread of this belief has gone on for one or two generations, not only not checked by the bishops or the Holy See but with their express

official approval, shown by their respective endorsements of each edition of the said text-books. Then, we say, the fact of such unanimous teaching of Catholic theologians in such circumstances, or settings, is manifest proof to Catholics that such teaching is true and certain. The point has not been ultimately defined and probably never will be. And it is not an article of faith, and probably it never will become one. And it is not a sin of heresy to doubt or contradict it. However, to doubt it is unreasonable, and shows imprudent temerity and a lack of the interior reverence due to sacred authority. No case like this can be found in which the Catholic Church has gone backward and undone things which have thus been done by the theologians under the approving eyes of the bishops and the Holy See.

It is rare that all lawyers or physicians agree on a point of law or medicine. But given such unanimous agreement that a point is certain, who doubts its truth? None better than the theologians know the teachings of God and the Church and what these teachings mean and imply, and none are closer than they to the mind of the Holy See and the bishops and the Catholic people and pastors, over whose beliefs there is a special providence even where there is not a strict promise of absolute infallibility.

We have seen amongst us in our age a few men called Modernists. Infatuated with love of novelty and false progress in doctrine, they sought to overthrow all religious truth and to discard all the traditional spiritual wisdom which is the precious heritage of the human race. They aimed at radically revolutionizing the Catholic Church and changing it to suit the ever shifting religious follies of our age. They would have changed all our ideas on the Church, the priests, the bishops, the Pope, the sacraments, Scriptures, tradition, saints, Christ, God, truth, falsehood, right and wrong, whose very existence they denied or doubted. And some of their leaders would have condescended to make peace with the Catholic Church under the one simple condition that the Catholic Church would surrender to them its theologians, called by them "dogmatists." And this simple condition, being interpreted, signifies: The false prophet, or ravening wolf disguised in sheep's clothing, would condescend to make peace

with the shepherds and the sheep, if the latter parties would only consent to send away or gag or muzzle their watch-dogs.

Truly the Holy Father and our bishops and pastors are our shepherds, but the theologians are our faithful shepherd-dogs, who see or scent the wolf from afar. And when all the watch-dogs on guard over all the groups of the sheep and lambs of the true fold of Christ, for a whole generation and longer, have been barking loudly and furiously at something that would approach in the clothing of sheep, and the head shepherd and all his brother shepherds have all this while been fondly patting these dogs on the head for thus barking, we are sure that that something is not a sheep or a friend of the sheep, but a ravening wolf. This chorus of the voices of the dogs is not the same thing as would be the chorus of the voices of the shepherds and of the chief shepherd, crying "Wolf! Wolf!" But from these circumstances surrounding the barking of the dogs, we know that the shepherds must cry "Wolf! Wolf!" if they ever see fit with their own voices to cry out to their sheep and openly tell them what that thing is.

Thus far we have tried to answer to the satisfaction of some who are not familiar with the treatise on theological sources and their value, what the fact of the unanimity of theologians proves. We will now show that this unanimity on our point is a fact.

We have on our desk before us as we are writing, a tiny booklet of thirty-one small pages and we beg close attention to each one of the following words printed on its cover:

"Perfect Contrition. A Golden Key of Heaven for All Good Christian People. By Rev. J. Von Den Driesch. With Preface by Rev. A. Lehmkuhl, S.J. Translated by Rev. Th. Slater, S.J." It bears the "Imprimatur" of Most Rev. John J. Glennon, D.D., Archbishop of St. Louis. On page 6, we read:

"The learned and pious Cardinal Franzelin said: 'Could I preach throughout the whole world, of nothing would I speak more frequently than of perfect contrition.'"

The reader sees, from his first glance at the title, the aim of the whole booklet, which is to show that perfect contrition is a golden key of heaven for all good Christians and

not only for the few great saints. In other words, that perfect contrition is not hard and rare but easy and common.

The following observations on the significance of the above-mentioned illustrious names may be welcomed by some who are not familiar with the history of the theological literature of our day.

Who was Cardinal Franzelin, who is here quoted as directly implying that perfect contrition is easy for the masses of Christians throughout the whole world? He was the author of a course of theological works which are all recognized as classics. He was venerated by Pius IX and the prelates and theologians assembled in the Council of the Vatican. Pope Pius IX made him a Cardinal, and Pope Leo XIII long leaned on him as a true friend, on whose childlike candor he could ever rely.

Who is Father Lehmkuhl, who endorses the doctrine of the booklet by writing its preface? He is a venerable septuagenarian who has lived to see more than forty thousand sets of his two tomes on Moral Theology already sold. He has long been recognized as one of the greatest theological authorities of our age. His exactness as to any statement which he makes is well known to amount almost to scrupulosity.

Who is Father Slater, who shows his approval of the doctrine in the booklet by translating it? He is a professor of theology in the scholasticate of the English Jesuits at St. Beuno's in Wales. American priests know him as the author of many up-to-date articles in the "Ecclesiastical Review," and as the first who has ventured to publish a full course of moral theology in English.

Who is Father Von Den Driesch, the author of this truly golden booklet for which Father Lehmkuhl wishes the widest circulation possible and which, according to information received from the publisher, in the summer of 1911, had already reached a circulation of 90,000, in this American edition, thanks to the zeal and co-operation of American parish priests and missionaries?

We are told by a former student of Innsbruck that he is an alumnus of that university and that the doctrine of the booklet was there insisted upon by such personages as Noldin and Hurter, and Kerns and Jung and Funk, who hailed with

joy the first appearance of the booklet and urged the students to diffuse it.

Noldin's work on moral theology has, we are told, already reached a circulation of 40,000 sets. We have before us an edition of Hurter's dogmatic theology marked "forty-eighth thousand." The fiftieth thousand was printed to commemorate Father Hurter's fiftieth anniversary of teaching.

What, then, is the significance of the illustrious names attached to this booklet? It is that the doctrine contained in it is sanctioned by the Most Reverend John J. Glennon, Archbishop of St. Louis, who is surely a fair representative of the American episcopate, and by numerous American missionaries and pastors, and by lights of the great theological faculties of the Gregorian University at Rome for Italy, and of Innsbruck for Austria, and of Valkenberg for Germany and Holland, and of St. Beuno's for England.

For the moment, leaving out the other witnesses, let us take Lehmkuhl by himself and see what his testimony establishes. He, without reserve, lends his name for positively asserting to the Catholic multitude that perfect contrition is easy for all good Christians. If any grave Catholic author in our day had asserted the contrary, Lehmkuhl would surely have known the fact of such an author's existence and assertion. And knowing this fact and being so modest and cautious habitually, it is not likely that he would have lent his great name here to such a popular booklet. Therefore, merely from the positive stand he has taken, we can gather that it is fairly sure that he is voicing what he considers the unanimous teaching of his brother theologians.

We will now proceed to take the depositions of the theologians individually. If our book here appears somewhat scattered and patchy we beg the kind reader to remember that he ought not to exact strict consecutive continuity of thought in the depositions of witnesses who had not met to consult and act in concert, but spoke out at various times in various places to various audiences and for various purposes and whose testimony can not be suspected of collusion.

We will cite as our next witness Father John Peter Gury, S.J., who expressly teaches that love for God is easy

and common among ordinary Christians in the following words:

"The Commandment of Charity [or loving God above all things because He is infinitely good] is easily fulfilled by the faithful who live piously, because they very often make acts of charity by rejoicing in the divine perfections, by desiring that no one would offend God, and that all would love and worship Him and keep His commandments, by praying devoutly that His name be hallowed, that His will be done, by avoiding sin because it displeases Him, etc."

Therefore, it is a plain fact that Gury teaches in express terms our proposition that true love for God is easy and common among Christians of ordinary piety and instruction.

Gury published the first edition of his compendium of moral theology according to the mind of St. Alphonsus in the year 1850. Without counting the fifteen editions annotated by Ballerini or Palmieri, Somervogel specifies fifty-four editions of this work gotten out under Gury's name, and these have been followed by others since Somervogel wrote. The work has been translated into German, Spanish, and Portuguese. Several authors have used Gury's compendium as a basis for courses of moral theology published over their names, although they give Gury full credit for what they have borrowed from him. Such, for example, are Bucceroni of the Gregorian University at Rome, and Genicot of Louvain, and finally Koenings, and Sabetti-Barrett (23 editions) of the United States. Editions of Gury have been annotated by such erudite and critical scholars as Ballerini; Palmieri; Cretoni, O.S.A.; Seitz; Dumas; and Ferreres. Not one of these annotators or adapters has disagreed with Gury's doctrine on the present point. All of the annotators have here left Gury's original words intact, and all of the adapters have retained at least the substance of these words. And some have used words which are fuller and more emphatic.

An objection might be started against the authority of Gury's compendium, as some theologians charge that we now know that it is not eminent for erudition or critical accuracy. *If* this charge were granted to be true it would prove nothing on the present point. For no one will make such a charge against Ballerini or Palmieri or Ferreres, etc., who have revised and annotated one edition after another of this com-



pendium, and in each edition have retained the words of Gury on this point. In the edition of 1907, the fifteenth by Ballerini or Palmieri, the latter in his preface tells the reader that he has changed the original text of Gury where a change had been found necessary or useful. However, he here retains the above cited words. Moreover, we read in Vol. II, paragraph 148, on page 109, in the edition of 1899, of the great *Opus Morale* or Treatise on Moral Theology of Anthony Ballerini, which is "completed and edited and extended and corrected" by Dominic Palmieri, the following words:

"It is well said by Gury, Vol. I, paragraph 219, that the faithful easily fulfil this precept. For they elicit acts of charity very often by being glad at the divine perfections, by wishing that no one would offend God, by grieving at offenses of God committed by others, by desiring that all may honor Him and that His name be sanctified, by shunning sins because they displease Him, by keeping the law in order to serve Him and subject themselves to Him as the Lord."

Again no one will make this charge of lack of profound learning or critical powers against any of the other annotators. We have not the means of verifying with our eyes the presence, in each of their editions, of the words in question; but we are morally certain that they are there present, as a storm of protest would surely have been raised by these words being expunged. For such expunging would have raised a suspicion of Jansenism. Anyhow we are now proving the *fact* that this teaching is unanimous among the theologians of our day and the strength of our proof of this *fact* lies not so much in the weight as in the number of authors who have taught this point to the teachers of the Catholic people, and the preceding remarks show that the number is almost countless.

After hearing from Gury and his many followers the general affirmation that love for God is easy and common among ordinary Christians, we will now hear a witness who makes the general affirmation that love for God is not extraordinary.

The following passage is taken from "The Graces of Interior Prayer, A Treatise on Mystical Theology," by R. P. Aug. Poulain, S.J., translated from the Sixth Edition by Leonora L. Yorke-Smith, with a Preface by the Rev. D. Considine, S.J., pages 1, 2, and 3.

"1. *Fundamental distinction.* Before reviewing the various degrees of mental prayer, they must be divided into two main categories—the prayer termed *ordinary*, and *mystic* or *extraordinary* prayer. We apply the word 'mystic' to those supernatural acts or states which our own industry is powerless to produce, *even in a low degree, even momentarily.*

"2. *Explanation.* There are other supernatural acts which can be the result of our own efforts. *For instance, the man who wishes to make an act of contrition, hope, or love of God, is sure to succeed if he corresponds to grace; and he can always do so.* And it is the same with a host of meritorious actions—relieving the wants of the poor, self-mortification, prayer, etc. Preachers exhort all Christians to these acts; which would be an absurdity if they did not depend on our own will.<sup>1</sup> This does not prevent these acts from depending upon divine grace; *but this grace is never refused* because God desires to give us means of acquiring merit. So it is with an engine driver on his locomotive—two actions are about to be combined. It rests with the man to start or stop his engine by the turning of a lever. But all that he does by this slight movement is to bring an enormous power into play—that of steam under high pressure. The motive power lies not in his feeble arm but in the steam, but this latter is always at his disposal. (This comparison must not be urged in too

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<sup>1</sup>The writer has often heard a playful octogenarian rehearse a sermon preached by the Blessed Curé of Ars in his old age. "My very dear brethren, we must love God, because He is good. Yes, my very dear brethren, we must love God very much, because He is very good. Ah, my very, very dear brethren, we must love our good God with our whole heart because He is all goodness. Truly, my very, very dear brethren, we must love God truly, because He loves us truly and He is truly good, and we must love Him perfectly because He is perfectly, infinitely good."

Let us place alongside of this sermon of the Blessed Curé of Ars the following passage from the commentaries of St. Jerome on the Epistle to the Galatians (*Cf. Roman Breviary, for December 27*).

"Blessed John the Evangelist, who continued to dwell at Ephesus to the last days of his long life and finally could barely be carried in the arms of the disciples to the church and could not sustain his voice for many words, in every gathering of the faithful was accustomed to utter nothing but this phrase: 'My little children, love one another.'

"The disciples and brethren who were present finally becoming weary of ever hearing the same thing, said: 'Master, why are you always saying this?' And he replied in a sentiment worthy of John: 'Because it is the commandment of the Lord, and if it alone is fulfilled, it is enough.'"

It goes without saying that St. John meant not a love of mere humanity or philanthropy or of the absurd morality without God, but Christian charity which wishes earthly and heavenly happiness to our neighbor, who is like ourself designed to be a child of Our Heavenly Father and a brother of Our Lord Jesus Christ and an heir of our common home in heaven.

These exhortations to the multitude to love God and our neighbor are thus seen to have been made at Ars in the nineteenth century and at Ephesus in the first by venerable saintly sages whose lips were incapable of uttering absurdities.

strict a sense. I am obliged to leave out of the question the preventing grace that aids us to will.)

"3. On the other hand, there are many supernatural phenomena which always evade our endeavors. Strive as I may to make energetic acts of the will in order to prophesy, or to see God or my guardian angel or Satan; nothing, absolutely nothing will result, unless God intervenes in a special manner. I shall not even, as the above definition says, succeed in a low degree or momentarily. This is what we call a mystic state. Ordinary prayer may be compared to the atmosphere that surrounds our globe. The birds move about in it at will. Thanks to its aid, they can rise above the earth, and they mount higher in proportion to the strength of their wing-beats. But this atmosphere has its limits. Above, lie those vast expanses that stretch away to the stars and beyond. Try as they may, they can not penetrate thither, *even by redoubling their efforts*. The eagle is as powerless as the rest. God alone can transport them to this region; were He to do so, they would lie passive in His hand, there would be no further need to use their wings. They would have to discard their former methods of operation and adopt new ones. This upper region, where the wing no longer has any power, is a figure of the mystic state. It resembles it also by its peace, its silence. Far from the turmoil of earth we enter into a space empty of all created things. God dwells there alone. Certain persons will prefer a historic definition and one that is more easily grasped; the following suffices instead of many discussions. We will give the name mystic to the states that St. Theresa describes in the latter part of her *life*, beginning at chapter 14, and in the last four mansions of the 'interior castle.'

"4. And so mystic theology comes to be defined: It is the science of the study of the mystic states.

"5. *Consequence*. From the above definition it follows that a supernatural state should not be described as mystic if it differs only in intensity or in duration from that which any one can produce at will.

"6. By way of application, let us put this question. Are we in the mystic state by the mere fact that we feel a sudden and very ardent fervor in our prayer?

"By no means. It is true that this fervor does not usually depend upon our own will. We can not, alas! procure it at pleasure or we should never suffer from aridity. But there is a part of the definition not yet verified. In order that such a state should be mystic, as has been said, it must not be procurable at will, *even in a low degree, even momentarily*. But we can all, when we choose, procure in a low degree, or momentarily, a sentiment of love for God, of devotion, that is to say. So that fervor and divine love do not necessarily belong to the mystic state. It is possible that it should be ordinary prayer, *as to kind*, even when the love becomes ardent.

"7. From the above definition we see the utility of the words 'even in a low degree, even momentarily.' They help us to a clear solu-

tion of certain difficulties. In introducing them into the definition, I have merely given expression, however, to an idea which was implied by all writers when they said that it is absolutely impossible to procure the mystic state by ourselves.

"8. The preceding definition is that which St. Theresa gives in a little treatise addressed under the form of her *second letter* to Father Rodrigo Alvarez. She begins to define the mystic states by employing the synonymous term of 'supernatural states of prayer': Supernatural—so I call that which no skill or effort of ours, however much we labor, can attain to, though we should prepare ourselves for it, and that preparation must be of great service. (Relation VIII. 3. Life, p. 455.) She shows elsewhere that she has this definition in mind when she says: 'This is a thing *supernatural* and which we can not acquire with all the deligence we use.' (Way of Perfection, chapter 31, page 93.) In her other works the saint describes the mystic states without first giving any general definition concerning them.

"9. We can make the above definition *still more exact*, and say; we give the name of mystic to supernatural states containing a knowledge of a kind that our own efforts and our own exertions could never succeed in producing. We saw just now that love can not effect a specific difference between ordinary prayer and the ordinary state. (See Suarez, De Orat, Book II, chapter 9, No. 13.) Even in heaven it will not be of a new species, but only of a greater intensity. The difference, then, must be drawn from the kind of knowledge that we receive. If we read St. Theresa and other great mystic writers, we shall see that this is also their belief."

From the words in this passage we see that Father Poulain at the head of his profound work openly states the proposition which we laid down at the head of our book; namely, that any man who wishes can make acts of love. According to him these acts are indeed supernatural but ordinary and as ordinary as for the engine driver to move his locomotive with the aid of steam and as for the birds to fly with aid of the air, because the supernatural actual graces of God aiding us to make acts of love are as ever present as the steam in the boiler and the air in the atmosphere. He tells us that there are mystic states of the soul which are like the power of prophecy, etc., and that these are as much above the most energetic exertions of our will as flying to the stars or beyond them is above the power of the eagle, and that this mystic state supposes a knowledge which is rare and of a kind which our mind of itself can never attain. He tells us that this state is extraordinary but that love for God is not something extraordinary but ordinary and that at all times by the use of the knowledge

and the will-power and the graces which we all ever have, we can make acts of love of lower if not of higher intensity.

The testimony of Father Poulain is so open and strong in favor of our proposition that acts of love are not hard and rare save in the case of saints and that they are easy in practice and common in fact among ordinary Christian souls, that the reader would like to know what is the value of his testimony and how great is his authority as an expert in this matter. Every one who has access to his book may see those things for himself from endorsements by our Holy Father Pius X and Cardinal Merry del Val, Papal Secretary of State, and the late Cardinal Steinhilber, Prefect of the Congregation of the Index.

Our next witness who makes the general affirmation that true love for God is easy and common among souls of ordinary piety will be Father Ad. Tanqueray, S.S. This distinguished son of M. Olier taught for ten years at St. Mary's, Baltimore, the mother of American seminaries, and is esteemed and loved by hundreds of American priests as their favorite authority. His words, published with the warm approval of his brother Sulpicians, are a fair index of the sentiments of that whole Congregation and of the tens of thousands of priests now living whom the Congregation has educated and formed. On page 441, Vol. II, of his "Moral Theology," printed at Cincinnati in the year 1908, we read:

"In practice, those who live like Christians and are accustomed to say morning and evening prayers regularly, are not to be troubled about this matter, since they fully satisfy the precept of charity by these prayers."

Acts of love are held to be even easier and more common than this by Benedict Ojetti, S.J., in his "Dictionary of Moral Theology and Canon Law," in the edition before us which was published in 1904. The following are his words under the term "Caritas":

"Those who retain the purpose of avoiding grievous sins should not be anxious about this obligation."

He believes, therefore, that love for God is so common that each one who retains the purpose of avoiding mortal sin ought to presume that love for God is his motive in this purpose,

at least frequently. If any one fears that Ojetti here goes too far, we would recall that St. Alphonsus, following Cardenas, believed that any one who has avoided mortal sin for a month *must* have made acts of love for God, without which he would not have had the strength of soul to persevere in grace and in resistance to temptations. This teaching of the Holy Doctor is insisted on and defended by Father Aertyns in his recently published work. Should some dislike the reasoning of St. Alphonsus here, they should not blame those who accept his conclusion as at least probable and safe.

Anyhow, this text shows the fact that St. Alphonsus and his many learned and zealous sons hold that love is easy and common.

“But how can the commandment to love God with the true love of charity, which is the first and greatest (‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind; this is the greatest and first commandment’); how, I say, can this commandment (which is to be observed by all) be so difficult? Indeed, the opinion that there is a great difficulty in eliciting an act of perfect charity is very widely diffused, but it must be false and had its origin from Jansenism or at least was greatly fomented by Jansenism.”

This citation makes the general and emphatic affirmation that true love for God is not difficult for any one. The work from which the words are taken is “Practice of the Confessor,” by Canon Æmilio Berardi, fourth edition, printed in 1903, and preceded by a letter of marked commendation from Pope Leo XIII, dated January 10, 1895. The author, after the cited words, refers to Gury and to the great Cardinal d’Annibale, who died in the year 1892, and to Frassinetti, who died in the year 1868.

These words of Berardi are transcribed and endorsed by Father John Morini of the Congregation of the Mission or Vincentian Fathers, in his “Moral Theology,” fifth edition, printed at Turin in 1899. Berardi, Vol. IX, pages 10-11, has also the following:

“It is to be noted that this servile love easily passes on to love which is filial. If, for instance, some one considers the beneficence and mercy of God not only as useful to himself but also as an attribute which independently of all utility to himself renders God infinitely amiable.”

“Those who live piously, easily satisfy the precept of charity, especially by reciting the Our Father.”

The brevity of these last lines is strong emphasis. They are taken from the “Compendium of Moral Theology dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary,” by Brother Joseph Calasanctius Cardinal Vivès y Tuto of the Order of Minors, Capuchins, ninth edition, 1909, p. 133. He was known to be truly eminent both as a scholar and as a man of affairs, as was his brother before him, Cardinal Bonaventure, the Seraphic Doctor, who even expects and supposes perfect contrition in every one who comes to confession and asks for absolution! From the latter’s doctrine we can easily guess what must be the belief of the priests of the Seraphic Order, the most numerous of all the Orders of priests, and how widespread this belief has become in the Church through these numerous teachers.

That we did not guess wrongly is shown by the following words taken from the “Moral Theology” of Father Benjamin Elbel of the Order of St. Francis, edited by Father Irenæus Bierbaum of the Order of St. Francis and published at Paderborn in the year 1891, Vol. I, page 338.

“How is it possible to arouse to a real supernatural act of love for God men in general, and in particular those who are very ignorant and totally sunken in the base desires of the things of the world? They are to be aroused to this act by beginning with motives which are natural and appeal to the senses and by ascending to motives which are higher and supernatural, *e. g.*, in this or some other like way: ‘My dearest child, do you not love your parents or those who do good to you? Do you not know, then, that God is your most good Father, that He made us out of nothing, and keeps us in life and to keep us in life gives us every day countless and very great good things and is further ready to give us a life and a happiness without end for our scanty merits? Therefore, most dear child, do you not sincerely love and wish to love this best Father of ours? Then say and say from your heart: “O my supreme and infinite goodness, most lovable God, I love You with my whole heart and I love You because You are supremely and infinitely good. My God, I love You and I wish to love You more and more. Give me, O my God and my all, give me this grace, that I may long for You and love You as much as I wish and as much as I ought to love You.”’”

The words of this question and answer clearly suppose that with the help of a fatherly priest the act of love can be made even by one previously buried in ignorance and vice.

The following full affirmation of the easiness of divine love is taken from the "Moral Theology" of the Reverend Joseph Ærtyns, C.S.S.R., published in 1906:

"The commandment to love God does not impose on the faithful an unbearable burden, but rather a yoke which is sweet and a burden which is light. The faithful, who are God-fearing and are not slothful in their care of their salvation often make acts of love for God, although they do not advert that these are acts of love; for they make acts of love when they desire that all would serve God; when they wish to keep the commandments or to do pious works from the purpose of pleasing God. Therefore when they hear Mass, fast, hear a sermon, say prayers, give alms from the motive of pleasing God, they make acts of charity. Moreover, the Our Father contains three acts of charity; namely, the desire that the name of God be hallowed, that all on earth would do the will of God, and that there would come to us the Kingdom of the love of God. Therefore, whoever says the Our Father with attention and devotion really makes three acts of love for God. Then, as for those who say the Breviary, how many acts of love will they find in Psalm 117, if they say it with attention and devotion. Moreover, to resist temptations or abstain from mortal sins because they grievously displease God, is an action or omission from the love of God."

Father Ærtyns here speaks only like the ordinary son of his father, St. Alphonsus. As we read in Hurter, in the year 1871, more than six hundred cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops or other prelates signed a petition to Pope Pius IX begging that St. Alphonsus would be declared a Doctor of the Church. In this petition, they said:

"The writings of Alphonsus, approved by the Apostolic See, have restored the mercy, kindness, and sweetness of the Heart of Jesus to the sacred tribunal. They are read by all with eagerness and delight. Accepted in Catholic schools, they are justly and deservedly regarded as a safe, sound and perpetual rule."

And Pius IX in the Encyclical of July 7, 1871, in which he responds to the petition and grants the requested title, says:

"By his learned and laborious writings, the pest of Jansenism, which had been transplanted from hell, was torn up by the roots and thrown out of the field of the Lord."

Let any one take up the new edition by Casterman of Tournay, of the "Praxis Confessarii" by St. Alphonsus. Not far from the beginning of the first little volume his eye is caught by the question: "How is the young confessor to act



with penitents who are so grossly ignorant that they have come into the confessional without any purpose of amendment?" And the answer of the Saint to this one question would be enough by itself to justify the sentence of Pius IX that Alphonsus had cast out of the field of the Lord the last remnants of pharisaical Jansenism and also to justify the ground of this sentence; namely, that he had restored the mercy, kindness and sweetness of the Heart of Jesus to the sacred tribunal. For Jesus had come to save all sinners and cure all sins and all infirmities of all souls, and not only to raise dead souls to life and cleanse filthy souls from leprosy, and cure the souls that are lame and paralytic, but also to cure souls that are deaf and dumb and blind. And here are souls that have fallen into dumbness, deafness, paralysis, and leprosy, and possession by the devil, and death—why? Because they were blind. The Holy Doctor, therefore, has the spirit of the Sacred Heart when he cautions the young confessor not to drive these blind souls away from the source of life, but to enlighten them and then persuade them to make a purpose to avoid all mortal sin and its proximate occasions, and thence lead them to attrition and after attrition to *contrition!* Therefore, he openly implies that even for the grossly ignorant who have come to confession without the purpose of amendment, acts of love and perfect contrition are in his judgment not impossible or even improbable.

To know what the theologians of our day teach on a point, it is almost enough to know what St. Alphonsus holds on that point. For the Holy See has decreed that any confessor or professor may prudently follow any teaching of St. Alphonsus even without looking into his reasons, and most of the moral theologies written in our days on their first page inform the reader that they are written according to the mind of St. Alphonsus, and all the authors do this even when they do not say it. And we have seen above that St. Alphonsus and the sons of St. Alphonsus openly affirm that acts of love are not hard and rare, but easy and common. Further on, we shall dwell at length on the sweet and useful truth that acts of perfect contrition are very easy for the great sinner, especially with the aid of a kind confessor.

The witnesses already called make the general affirmation

that the act of love is easy. We will now call others who dwell not only on the mere affirmation of this truth but also on the proofs that make it easily seen by the mind and on the causes that make it easily practised by the will.

There was a time when the works of Perrone on dogmatic theology were used in the seminaries almost as widely as the compendium of moral theology by Gury. He may be properly classed among the authors of our day, since many are still living who in youth enjoyed the genial acquaintance of the pious and learned old man who had taken such a distinguished part in aiding Pius IX in measures pertaining to the definition of the Immaculate Conception and the proclamation of the Syllabus. His ample treatise on the virtues of faith, hope, and charity is now becoming rare on the shelves of the ordinary library. Therefore, we will translate two passages for the benefit of those who may not have the work at hand. We read on page 352 :

“We must not here omit that the act of love for God is *very* easy for one who is in the state of grace, as he has the habit of charity; but the sinner is *more* easily moved by fear or hope than by pure love for God, loved for Himself. Hence most highly to be commended is the goodness of God, who, to render the justification of the sinner *more* easy, instituted the sacraments of Baptism and Penance, in which sacraments it is sufficient to have the love called ‘love of concupiscence’ even conceived from fear. But when the sinner has been justified he will be able then, by the habit of charity obtained through the sacrament, to make acts of perfect charity with *great facility*.”

Later on, we will have much to say in favor of the sinner and his power to look on God as a kind Father to him, and thence to have not only servile fear and the hope of forgiveness, graces, and salvation, but also true filial love for God our good Father. For the present we note only that Perrone says it is *very* easy for every one, who is in the state of grace to elicit true acts of love and that he makes acts of perfect charity with *great facility*. What is the cause making this act easy? It is the state of grace, the gift of sanctifying or habitual grace, which as necessarily includes the gift of the faculties and inclinations of faith, hope, and charity, as the gift of our soul from God includes the gift of the faculties of will, memory, and understanding. Indeed, some even think

that habitual grace is the habit of charity and that the habit of charity is habitual grace; and thus that the habit of charity is more like the very substance of the soul, the principle of life, than like one of its faculties. But this question is beside our present purpose. For all hold that whoever has habitual grace also has the habit of charity, and Perrone rightly says that the existence of this habit or power and inclination in my soul makes the act of love *very* easy for me.

And how does the possession of this habit make the act of love very easy? We will allow St. Thomas to answer. (2. 2. q. 23, a. 2.)

“Although the will is moved by the Holy Spirit to love, it is necessary that the will itself be the efficient cause of the act of love. But no act is produced by an active power in a perfect way unless the act be connatural [a second nature] to the power, by means of some inherent faculty which is the principle of the action. Hence God who moves all things to their proper ends, has placed in all creatures faculties by which they are inclined to the ends prefixed to them by Him, and in this way He disposes all things sweetly. (Wisdom viii. 1.) But it is manifest that charity exceeds the *natural* power of the will. Therefore, unless there were superadded to the natural power of the will some faculty by which the will is inclined to the act of love, the act of love or charity would be more imperfect than natural acts and than acts of the other virtues, and the act of love *would not be easy and delightful*. But this is clearly false: because *no virtue has such a strong inclination to its own act as charity and no virtue operates with such great delight*. Whence it is most necessary that for the act of charity there exist in us some habitual power inclining itself to the act of charity and causing it to *operate promptly and with delight*.”

After perusing the above words the reader will love to pause and ponder in the first place who it is that says them. It is St. Thomas himself, the prince of theologians, whose works were placed on the center table in the hall of the Council of Trent alongside of the books of the Holy Scriptures and Fathers and the decrees of the Councils. The sixth lesson of the Roman Breviary for the eighth day of March says:

“Compared with the holy angelic spirits not less for his innocence than for his genius, he justly obtained the name of the Angelic Doctor, which title was confirmed to him by the authority of St. Pius V, and Leo XIII most willingly welcoming the petitions and prayers of almost all the bishops of the Catholic world, especially in order to ward off the pest of so many philosophic systems swerving

from truth, and to promote the common good of the human race, with the advice of the Congregation of Sacred Rites, declared and made him the heavenly patron of all Catholic schools."

Father Harent, in his series of articles in the "*Etudes Religieuses*" of Paris, printed in the year 1911, and treating of the true and the false notions of love for God, tells us that the authority of St. Thomas has been and is appealed to as the highest on this special matter by all the greatest Catholic writers on this subject from the days of St. Francis de Sales, Fénelon, and Bossuet, down to our own time, and that St. Thomas has treated the subject more fully and profoundly even than St. Augustine. How slow, therefore, any Catholic theologian endowed with the proverbial one grain of piety, two of learning, and three of prudence or good sense, would be to contradict the clear teaching of St. Thomas on this point! And what a strong presumption of the fact that Catholic theologians teach that acts of love are easy is created by the very fact that St. Thomas clearly and positively teaches that they are easy! And nothing could be clearer than his assertion that the act of love is easy and delightful, that there is in us who are in the state of grace a power inclining itself to the act of charity or love, and causing itself to operate promptly and with delight, and that our power to love God is more active and more delightful to itself than any other power which we have to do any other virtuous act. We beg close attention to this last clause. When the reader has pondered it, will it not appear to him that the Angel of the Schools goes so far as to teach that because our power to love God is more active and delightful than our power to fear Him, etc., therefore those of us who are in the state of grace and have this power to love Him, can make acts of love even more easily than acts of fear?

Again, this assertion is not only clear and far reaching, but it is also positive and unhesitating. For, considering the proposition that the act of love is not easy and delightful, he not only says that it is false—"*esse falsum*"—but that it is openly false—"*patet esse falsum*." Who is it that is here so positive? It is he who was ever most careful not to say that he was certain when there was any cause to doubt, and whose modesty and sense of his own limitations sometimes seem

to us not only childlike but even childish. The reader may see with his own eyes this lovable modesty in the first words of the brief prologue to the *Summa Theologica*, which is the deepest, clearest, and safest of all treatises on theology, queen of all sciences.

“Because the teacher of Catholic truth not only ought to instruct the advanced but also it belongs to him to ground beginners in the rudiments according to the saying of the Apostle—‘As unto little ones in Christ, I gave you milk to drink, not meat’ (1 Cor. iii. 1-2)—it is the scope of our plan in this work to treat those things which pertain to the Christian religion according to the method which is suitable for grounding beginners in the rudiments.”

Therefore, St. Thomas, in the *Summa*, whose method and matter he regarded as rudimentary, asserts that every one who is free from the state of mortal sin has a power and inclination to love God which is as active as the powers of the living fount to flow, of fire to flame, or oil to spread and soothe.

*“Fons vivus, ignis, charitas,  
Et spiritualis unctio.”*

And, moreover, according to him the exercise of this power is as delightful and prompt as flying and singing are to the skylark. For, according to the Fathers and Doctors, love for God because He is good, and love for our neighbor because God is good, are the two wings of the commandments. And again, charity is the melody of the soul, to which all the other virtues are accompaniments. And charity is a music which quells all tumults of base passions which would mar spiritual harmony.

A learned and kind professor, to whom we read the above passage, objected: “Because St. Thomas said in his preface that he would in his *Summa* follow the method suitable to grounding beginners in the rudiments, it is scarcely fair to conclude that the Angel of the Schools regarded each thing there taught as rudimentary.” We answer that it *is* fair to conclude that the Holy Doctor regards as rudimentary at least the contradictory of a thing about which he said: “*patet esse falsum.*”

We will now cite another passage from Perrone. “In order to ward off scruples and anxieties from the souls of the pious, Cardinal Gotti warns us that for an act of love to be made, it need not be

expressed in the following or any similar formula, 'I love Thee above all things'; because love consists in the thing or substance and not in a formula. And he illustrates this by the example of mothers. For although they love their children most ardently and spend every care upon them, yet perhaps they may have never testified this affection in express words. So, furthermore, one does not need to notice that he is making an act of love, since it is an act not of the intellect but of the will [which is less easily noticed by our consciousness]. Now I add that generally there is made an act of true love for God in works of piety, in prayers said with devotion, in the reception of the sacraments, without conscious advertence to the act of love."

That this teaching of St. Thomas and of Cardinal Gotti is held by the Dominican Fathers of our day is seen by the following extract from "Moral Theology" in a clear and compendious form, by Father Esteban Sacrest, O.P., printed at Madrid in 1906. On page 75, n. 179, he asks, "When is there an obligation of making acts of love?" And he answers that there are five special occasions or moments when the commandment to make these acts obliges and that one of these moments is at the dawn of reason and he adds the *observation*:

"With respect to the act of love at the first moment of entering on the use of reason, it is difficult to verify that the obligation has been complied with; however, as long as the contrary has not been proved, consciences ought not to be disturbed, and generally speaking, in the case of persons who comply with Christian duties we are to *suppose that they have complied also with this duty* and ordinarily also with the general obligation of the theological virtues whose exercise is implied in the usual Christian practices."

Hence he teaches that we should *suppose* that those who are faithful to the ordinary Christian practices and comply with their Christian duties in general, comply also with all of their obligations to make acts of love for God at any of the moments when these obligations become urgent.

Who is Cardinal Gotti, from whose treatise on charity Perrone extracts each one of the above assertions? He was born in 1664 and died in 1742. After mentioning other theologians of that epoch Hurter says: "However, the most celebrated theologian of all, we find in Italy, Vincent Louis Gotti of the Order of Preachers. He was in the conclave which finally elected the great Pope, Benedict XIV, but during the conclave, which was protracted through the two whole months

of July and August, the more powerful party had tried to elect Cardinal Gotti." The passage from Perrone is so clear and strong as to need no commentary. However, we call attention to the fact that the Jesuit agrees with the Dominican, who in turn agrees with St. Thomas and with our broad interpretation of his teaching. What a strong argument to show that theirs must be the common teaching of Catholic theologians!

Our next witness will be Cardinal Louis Billot, S.J., who for twenty-five years was professor of theology in the Pontifical Gregorian University at Rome. The volume is entitled "The Infused Virtues. A Commentary on the Second Part of St. Thomas." Our edition was printed at Rome in the year 1901 by the Polyglot Press of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda. On page 415 we read:

"It is necessary to remove the prejudice (which is one of the remnants of Jansenism) that the act of perfect love is a thing which is very hard. That this is *most false* is *manifestly apparent*, because this act is included in the limits of common grace as it lies within the limits of a commandment imposed upon all and is even at the head of all the commandments. Moreover, every rational creature is inclined by a natural inclination of his own will to love God above all things, as has already been noted from St. Thomas in the first part, q. 60, a. 5. And supposing a rational creature's elevation by God to a supernatural end, this inclination is connatural also to the love of friendship called charity. Indeed, it is true that in our state of fallen nature there are many things arising from concupiscence which draw us in the opposite direction and tend to weaken the natural or connatural inclination of our will to love God. But we must also consider that whatsoever of difficulty is found in the act of perfect love is already overcome by the purpose of renouncing sin, which purpose is included even in simple attrition. And thus, if we suppose that a will has turned away from sin (which turning away is necessarily and always required for justification in any circumstances) and if we therefore suppose that the impediment to loving God has been removed, then it is most easy 'to ascend to a high heart' by assuming the motive of charity, than which there is nothing more sweet or delightful and through which even all hard things become easy. For all things which are hard and severe are made altogether easy and almost nothing by love. How much more surely and easily charity does to obtain bliss, the things which concupiscence exerting itself to the utmost had done to obtain wretchedness. Not without reason did the illustrious vessel of election say with great joy: 'Unworthy are the sufferings of the present time to be compared to the future glory which shall be revealed in us.' Be-

hold whence that yoke is sweet and that burden light. And if the way is narrow for the few who choose it, yet it is easy for all who love it.

"The Psalmist says: 'On account of the words of Thy lips, I have kept hard ways.' But the things which are hard for those who labor, become easy for these same laborers when they love. And, therefore, by a dispensation of the divine tenderness, it has been brought to pass that the interior man, who is renewed from day to day, has been relieved of the loads of those innumerable observances which were truly a heavy yoke, but were properly imposed on the stiff neck. And it has likewise been brought to pass that all the troublesome things which the prince who has been cast out raised up against the interior man, are made light by interior joy. For nothing is so easy for a good will as good will itself. Therefore, no matter how much the world may rage, most truly did the angels exclaim to the Lord born in the flesh: 'Glory be to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of good will,' because the yoke of Him who was born is sweet and His burden light. (St. Augustine, Serm. 70, n. 3.)"

Cardinal Billot here agrees with the teaching of Berardi cited above that to hold that acts of love are hard, is to follow a blind prejudice which is a remnant of Jansenism. If you ask him what are his reasons for teaching that acts of love are easy for all, he answers:

"1. God commands all to love Him, therefore He gives to all the graces needful for them to make acts of love.

"2. Man's very nature inclines him to love for God.

"3. We have from original sin inclinations to do evil things and these inclinations are an obstacle to acts of love. But this obstacle has been counteracted and taken away by a purpose not to do evil things, if this purpose exists.

"4. This purpose is supposed even in attrition, and if it exists, nothing is easier than to take love of God as a motive for this purpose."

Cardinal Billot here touches briefly on heads of proofs which we will treat fully further on. He then cites a passage from St. Augustine to show that the observance of all of the commandments is easy, if we have love for God.

We beg leave to complete Cardinal Billot's argument from St. Augustine by some additional words of the great Bishop of Hippo which are cited in the catechism of the Council of Trent and which bring out his express teaching that not only is it easy to keep all the commandments *if* we love God, but also that it *is* easy to love God.



“The pastor will also teach that the commandments of God are not difficult of observance, as these words of St. Augustine are alone sufficient to show. How is it said to be impossible for man to love—to love, I say, a beneficent Creator, a most loving Father, and also in the persons of his own brethren to love his own flesh? Yet he who loveth hath fulfilled the whole law.”

Sometimes the great Doctor of Grace uses the term, “love for God,” in the broad sense of any act of good will, or any act or impulse of any virtue. But here he uses it, not in the broad but in the strict sense; namely, of heartily wishing well to God personally because He is good. And the obvious meaning of his strong figure is not only that love for God is possible but also that it is *far* from being impossible and thus easy. And this is the sense in which the catechism understands St. Augustine here. It continues:

“Hence, in his pious effusion addressed to the Deity itself, St. Augustine expresses his admiration of His infinite bounty. ‘What,’ says he, ‘is man that Thou wouldst be loved by him? And if he loves Thee not, Thou threatenest him with heavy punishment. Is it not punishment enough that I love Thee not?’ But should any one plead human infirmity for not loving God, it is not to be forgotten that He who demands our love ‘pours into our hearts’ by the Holy Ghost, the fervor of His love and ‘this good spirit our Heavenly Father gives to those who ask Him. ‘Give what thou commandest,’ says St. Augustine, ‘and command what thou pleasest.’ As then God is ever ready by His divine assistance to sustain our weakness, especially since the death of Christ the Lord, by which the prince of this world was cast out, there is no reason why we should be disheartened by the difficulty of the undertaking: ‘To him who loves nothing is difficult.’ When it is said, thou shalt not have strange gods before me, it is equivalent to saying, thou shalt worship me, the true God; thou shalt not worship strange gods. The former contains a precept of faith, hope, and charity—of charity, for who can behold the riches of His goodness and love, which He lavishes on us with so bounteous a hand, and not love Him?”

From these words we see the plain teaching of St. Augustine and of the catechism of the Council of Trent to be as follows:

Is it easy to keep all the commandments? Yes. What makes it easy to keep them? Love for God. But is love for God easy? Yes. What are some of the things which make it easy? The knowledge of His goodness and of His love for us; the nature of our soul, which feels the greatest pleasure

when we love Him and the greatest pain when we do not; and the good spirit of loving children which He pours into our hearts at least when we ask it.

The reader must not forget that we are proving that it is a fact that the theologians of our day teach that love for God is easy. The Catechism of the Council of Trent is also called the catechism to parish priests. It was prepared according to the following decree of the Council:

“That the faithful may approach the sacraments with greater reverence and devotion, the Holy Synod commands all bishops not only to explain, in a manner accommodated to the capacity of the receivers, the nature and use of the sacraments, when they are to be administered by themselves; but also to see that every pastor piously and prudently do the same, in the vernacular language, should it be necessary and convenient. This exposition is to accord with a form to be prescribed by the Holy Synod for the administration of all the sacraments, in a catechism which bishops will take care to have faithfully translated into the vernacular language and expounded to the people by all pastors.”

In execution of this decree, the catechism was prepared and it was finally published by command of the Pope, St. Pius V. Its study and its explanation to the people was recently urged on all pastors by our Holy Father Pius X. Even such a genius as the late Cardinal Newman tells us that he never spoke to the people on a matter of doctrine without having reviewed the teaching of the Catechism of the Council of Trent on his subject. It is good to note that the Catechism not only asserts that love for God is easy, but proves this assertion to be true from clear texts of the Scriptures and St. Augustine.

We have made these observations in order to remind the reader of the long and widespread and reverential use of the Catechism not only by pastors but also by theologians and that he may thus realize the force of our argument: The catechism of the Council of Trent teaches that acts of love are easy, thence we should presume the fact that the theologians and pastors teach it under the reign of Benedict XV and have taught it under the reign of every Pope since St. Pius V.

Our next witness to show that this teaching must be unani-

mous in our day will be St. Francis de Sales. As we said before, this is not a solemn sermon, but a familiar catechism chat, and we beg leave of our kind readers to tell of a personal experience on which our memory loves to linger. In the year 1876, as a young American, we had the sweet good fortune to dine with the genial and saintly Father Beckx and the distinguished members of his Curia at San Girolamo in Fiesole, which looks down over all the beauties and glories of Florence and the Valdarno. In honor of the coming of a guest, Father Beckx treated his assistants and secretaries to a tiny cup of coffee, which was sipped in the parlor around a circular table during the after-dinner recreation, which lasts for an hour. The reader will easily credit that the young American was all eyes and ears during the conversation between the "Black Pope" and the representatives of the Italian, French, Spanish, German, and English assistancies of the Jesuit Order, each one of whom showed himself such a true gentleman that the young American felt perfectly at home in the Tuscan edifice erected by Cosmo de Medici, the father of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

In that well-remembered conversation, one of the chief questions discussed by these venerable men selected from the leading races and tongues of the world, was whether St. Francis de Sales should be declared a Doctor of the Church. After a while all seemed to defer to the least aged of the Fathers, who had been the most retiring and the slowest to express his opinion and he summed up the case with the brief phrase: "St. Francis de Sales in his writings is ascetic or practical, I grant, but his practical conclusions and applications and illustrations, especially in his treatise on the love of God, are based on profound and solid learning which make him worthy to be declared a Doctor, an ascetic or practical Doctor, if you wish." These were the words of Father Anthony Mary Anderlèdy, the assistant for Germany, and afterward the successor of Father Beckx as general of the Society of Jesus. He was a native of Switzerland and especially interested in the new and rare honor asked for the saintly Bishop of Geneva. This conversation was in 1876 and St. Francis de Sales was declared a Doctor of the Church by Pius IX in 1877.

The reader of the life of the Saint observes that he was in cordial correspondence with Lessius, that he was intimate with Bellarmine, and that he had been taught by Maldonatus, whose commentary on the Gospels is said by Father Gigot to be the most truly critical of any which has been written to this day.

And if the reader looks over the annals of that age, which not only decisively checked but hurled back the deluge of Protestantism which had been triumphantly advancing over northern Europe, he will see that the above-mentioned illustrious theologians are only a few specimens from the galaxy of geniuses which made that epoch greater in the number and excellence of theologians than any era since that of Blessed Albertus Magnus, Alexander of Hales, St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure, Scotus, and Dante. And yet there were grave authors in that golden age of theology who called Francis de Sales its greatest theologian. And he *was* the greatest in his own special line, and what this line was may be learned from the decree of Pope Pius IX, who declared him a Doctor of the Church on June 19, 1877:

“St. Francis, by means of the charity and copious learning which were his power, brought down into the practice of mankind, the divine saying, ‘My yoke is sweet and My burden is light,’ and by many and varied treatises he made clear the way and the nature of Christian perfection; so that he showed it to be *easy and open for each individual Christian soul of every condition of life.*”

“And these treatises, written in a suave style and with the sweetness of charity, have produced richest fruits of piety in the whole Christian commonwealth.”

Pope Pius IX calls his treatise on the Love of God “*insignem et incomparabilem tractatum*”—“the illustrious and incomparable treatise.” And Hurter adds: “In it he marvelously explains the nature and character of the Love of God.” On account of the above-mentioned decree of Pope Pius IX, his doctrine may be justly claimed as that of a theologian of our day, and of such recognized pre-eminence in this practical matter that all others must love to follow him.

The reader will note that the Vicar of Christ, in this letter addressed to all the clergy and faithful of the whole world, affirms that St. Francis *showed that the way of perfection is easy and open for each individual Christian soul of every con-*

*dition of life.* Now, manifestly, there is no Christian perfection without acts of love for God. Hence Pius IX as Pope teaches the whole world that acts of love for God *are* easy for each individual Christian soul of every condition of life. These words of Pope Pius are among the clearest and strongest of all the proofs that love for God is easy for all and is held to be so by the theologians of our day.

The following passage is taken from the "Treatise on the Love of God," Book II, chapter 8.

"Our divine Saviour, who has redeemed us at the price of His precious blood, ardently desires that we should be inflamed with His holy love, that we may thereby merit to be saved and enjoy eternal happiness in His society; and He wishes that by attaining this happiness we may love Him eternally; for He desires that we may be saved in order to love Him and that on the other hand our salvation should be effected by means of love. He says in His gospel, 'I am come to cast fire on the earth; and what will I, but that it be kindled?' (Luke xii. 49.) The ardor of His desire is still more clearly expressed by the words He employs commanding us to love Him: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment.' (Matt. xxii. 37, 38.) Ah! Theotimus, it appears, if I may dare to say so, that the heart of God is passionately enamored of ours. Would it not have been a sufficient favor to permit us to love Him, as Laban allowed Jacob to love Rachel? No, such a permission was not sufficiently descriptive of the tenderness and ardor of His divine heart. An expressed commandment to love Him with all our strength was necessary that neither the greatness of God nor the misery of man, which usually remove us so far aloof from the divinity, nor any other pretext whatsoever, should deter us from fulfilling a duty which He wished to render so imperative.

"Could He prove more plainly that He was actuated by a wise design in leaving in us the inclination to love Him which was implanted in our hearts, at their creation? We alone are to blame if this inclination remain fruitless, since God actually commands us to cherish it and act on it and gives to *all men without exception* the graces necessary for compliance with His orders.

"The vivifying heat of the sun which revolves in the heavens, reaches every object, and, as if it were susceptible of love for the inferior works of creation, it communicates to them the vigor necessary for bringing forth their different products. Thus it is with the goodness of God; it may be called the soul or vital principle of all created souls; it influences all hearts, and desires to be the object of their affection; no one can conceal himself from the heat of its heavenly rays. 'Wisdom preacheth abroad,' says Solomon, 'she utter-

eth her voice in the streets. At the head of multitudes she crieth out; in the entrance of the gates of the city she uttereth her words, saying: O children, how long will you love childishness, and how long will fools covet those things which are hurtful to themselves, and the unwise hate knowledge? Turn ye at my reproof. Behold I will utter my spirit to you, and will show you my words.' (Proverbs i. 20-23.) This same eternal wisdom speaks as follows by the prophet Ezechiel: 'Thus you have spoken, saying: Our iniquities and our sins are upon us and we pine away in them. How then can we live?' Say to them: 'As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.' (Ezechiel xxxiii. 10, 11.) Now to live, according to the real life of God, is to love, for as St. John says 'He that loveth not, abideth in death.' (1 John iii. 14.) You may conclude from these texts, Theotimus, whether God desires our love or not.

"He is not satisfied with declaring that He desires to be loved, but, to induce us to profit by His loving invitation, He comes to us Himself, and in the most energetic terms, says, 'Behold, I stand at the gate and knock. If any man shall hear My voice and open to Me the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me.' (Apoc. iii. 20.) That is to say, I will bestow on him innumerable marks of tenderness and love.

"We must not suppose that the helps necessary for enabling us to love God and to obtain salvation by this love, are called sufficient as affording merely the necessary assistance to our weakness; on the contrary, God bestows His favors on us with a liberality and profusion proportional to His infinite love. If this were not the case, how could the great Apostle have addressed the obdurate sinner in these words: 'Despisest thou the riches of His goodness and patience and longsuffering? Knowest thou not that the benignity of God leadeth thee to penance? But according to thy hardness and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath.' (Rom. ii. 4, 5.) Do not then be surprised at meeting the words *sufficient* helps and remedies. Remember that the means which the Almighty employs to soften the heart of an obstinate sinner, include nothing less than the immense riches of His infinite goodness.

"The Apostle opposes the treasure of God's mercy to the obduracy of an impenitent heart, as if to show that the human heart possesses such a great fund of malice and iniquity, that it dares to despise the riches of the goodness and patience of God, which incline to repentance. We should particularly observe that this contempt is not directed to the goodness of God in general, but to His particular mercy toward the sinner, who can not be ignorant of its influence, since he despises and slights it at the very moment when it disposes his heart to repentance.

"In every part of the Scriptures we meet proofs of the liberality and goodness of God in the *more than sufficient* helps He grants sinners for enabling them to love Him.

“Consider this God of charity standing at the door of the human heart. He is not satisfied with knocking once only. He continues to smite and to speak to the soul which refuses Him entrance. ‘Arise, make haste, My love.’ (Cant. ii. 10.) He is not discouraged by a first refusal. He puts his hand through the keyhole (Cant. v. 4), and endeavors to open the door. He speaks loud in the streets and public places, and in inviting the sinner to be converted, He uses reiterated entreaties, which never appear to him sufficiently eloquent. ‘Be converted and do penance for all your iniquities. . . . Why will you die, O house of Israel? . . . return ye and live.’ (Ezech. xviii. 30-32.) He wishes to prove that His mercy is beyond all His works, that it surpasses His justice, that His redemption is superabundant, His love boundless, that He is rich in mercy (Eph. ii. 4), that He will have all men to be saved (1 Tim. ii. 4), that He is not willing that any one should perish but that all should return to penance.”

The length of the passage here borrowed might call for an apology if our book were addressed exclusively to theological specialists who all have this work on the shelves of their libraries. But even some specialists may thank us for saving them the time which they might have to spend in hunting out and dusting this volume. Others who do not own it will be glad not only to see the few words of the Holy Doctor which would be enough to prove our point, but also to see them in their context and thus to be free from misgivings about their true and full meaning. And perhaps this plentiful taste from a much neglected classic, which is not only suave with the sweetness of charity and copious in accurate and profound learning but which also seems to us to rank with the Divine Comedy of Dante, the greatest of Christian poems, in poetic diction, imagery, and feeling, will determine some to buy the volume so as to peruse all of its short, sweet, and sparkling chapters.

Commentary on the passage is almost useless, as the words and their sense are so plain. Previously we had asked St. Thomas: “What is the cause which makes acts of love easy for those who are in the state of grace?” And there he had answered: “The cause is the nature of our habitual power to make acts of love which each one in the state of grace possesses, for this power is the most active and its exercise is the most delightful of all of our powers of virtue.

We now ask St. Francis de Sales: What are the causes making acts of love easy for *all* souls, and even for souls who

are not in the state of grace but are in mortal sin? And he answers: "The causes are not only man's natural inclination to love God, but also the abundance of *actual* supernatural graces which our good Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier gives to each individual soul, the sinful soul not excepted." The word "abundance" must be here emphasized. For the Holy Doctor not only asserts positively but proves solidly from the Scriptures, like a worthy pupil of Maldonatus, that our good God gives to each soul not only the graces which are necessary and sufficient but also such as are amply abundant to help us to make acts of love; and that he pours out these graces, not according to the measure of our strict necessities, but of the riches of His own goodness, and that He thus makes acts of love not only possible but easy for each sinner.

Because St. Francis de Sales was a missionary who personally converted 70,000 souls to Catholicity, and was also the founder and director of an Order of religious women, and a model ruler and Father of the clergy and people, and a moulder of the French language in the Elizabethan age, and an inexhaustible, playful wit, ever "religiously agreeable and agreeably religious," some might fancy that his authority could not be great as a scholastic theologian, as an explainer and definer of the extent of a Catholic teaching. But such a fancy should also cause us to doubt the theological authority of St. Augustine, who was many sided, too, like St. Francis de Sales. And in each one of the above items there is a striking parallel between the bishops of Geneva and of Hippo. However, the force of St. Augustine's authority to show the teaching of the Church on the nature, need, and distribution of grace lies chiefly in the approval by the Church of St. Augustine as the Doctor of Grace. And the force of our argument to prove from the authority of St. Francis de Sales that love for God is easy, lies in the special approval by the Church, and particularly by the Church of our own age represented by Pius IX, of St. Francis de Sales as the Doctor of the Love of God, who shows Christian perfection to be easy for any soul in any condition of life; that is, for all good Christian souls and for all bad souls too.

If a theologian objects that some sinners are called, by



the Scriptures and Fathers, blinded and hardened by the enormity and multitude of their past crimes and that such, according to the commonly accepted teaching, do not receive from God an abundance of lights and inspirations moving and attracting them to repentance, we reply that the words of St. Paul taken by St. Francis in their obvious sense do imply some abundance, if not of proximate or immediate helps to all the virtues, at least of the remote help or the help to pray for the other lights and inspirations. We reply also by the maxim of St. Thomas which we have often cited: "God, who gives abundantly to *all*, does not refuse grace to him who does what is in his power." It seems to us that we can save the teaching of the theologians adduced in the objection, by granting to them that usually, though not always, God gives fewer graces to the self-hardened and self-blinded and in this limited sense refuses them His graces.

Our next witness to the fact that theologians of our day hold that love for God is easy will be Father Matthew Russell, S.J., in his book entitled "At Home With God." We read on pages 210-211, in the chapter on The Great Commandment, the following words:

"If, then, the Commandment of love was easy when that doctor of the law proposed his question to Jesus—and it was easy, for God was always Our Father and Creator, the maker of this beautiful world, and in Him we live and move and have our being—and why, then, should we find it hard to love Him?—but it is far easier now, for Jesus has lived and died for us since then, and now we know God's love better than ever."

Here we see that love for God is easy because it is and always has been easy to know God as our good and loving Father and because this knowledge is still easier since we have seen Jesus live for us and die for us, and this knowledge causes love for Him and He is God.

Perhaps there is not one of our readers to whom Father Matthew needs any introduction. For he was well known, the world over, as the illustrious brother of the late Charles Russell, Lord Chief Justice of England, and was still better known as the able and amiable editor of the "Irish Monthly" and the author of many sweet little works in prose and verse. "At Home With God" is far from being a technical text-

book of theology, but its teachings are theologically scientific; and this passage is a fair specimen of the doctrine which is now current and approved in the Isle of St. Patrick and in all the lands to which the exiles of Erin and their descendants have carried their Catholic faith and literature.

The following is the act of Contrition in "Butler's Catechism":

"O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee and I detest my sins most sincerely because they displease Thee, my God, who art so deserving of all my love, and I firmly purpose, with the assistance of Thy grace, never more to offend Thee and to amend my life."

"Butler's Catechism" is now about a hundred years old. Before the third plenary council of Baltimore and the catechism issued by its order, Butler's was used almost universally in the United States, and its use in Ireland has been almost universal for a hundred years. These facts strongly indicate the confidence of the Irish and American bishops and priests in the power of their people and even of their children to make acts of perfect contrition, the confidence that the absolution would not be exposed to invalidity by failure to make acts of perfect contrition, and that no souls would be lost by omitting explicit acts of imperfect contrition. We do not blame the Baltimore catechism and others for inserting explicit motives of attrition. Still less do we blame the Irish clergy for training their people to habitually look on the God whom we have displeased by sin as the kind Father deserving of all our love.

Even non-Catholic statisticians recognize that of all peoples the Irish Catholics have the lowest record for crimes of theft, robbery, divorce, adultery, race-suicide, suicide, or murder. We do not speak of crimes of irreligion and apostasy from God. Their generous faith needs not to be mentioned. Such are the fruits, and this act of perfect contrition is at least a great branch of the tree that bears such abundant faith and good works.

Anyhow, the use of this exclusive act of perfect contrition shows that the pastors and people of Ireland virtually admit that acts of love and perfect contrition are so easy in

practice as to be common in fact among the multitude of ordinary Christians in Ireland.

That perfect contrition is and always has been easy and common is expressly taught also by Rev. Thomas O'Donnell, C.M., President of All Hallows College, Dublin, in his recent work, "The Priest of To-day. His Ideals and His Duties."

In our first pages we stated that this is not a full treatise on the vast subject of love for God but only one practical chapter which many of the great classic treatises appear to have touched but briefly or indirectly, when they have not altogether left it out. The words "many" and "great" were purposely put in before the words "classic treatises," to make the phrase rigidly accurate. For there is one treatise which not only supposes, but openly and directly says, that pure love for God is easy for saint and sinner, and was written from beginning to end to make this truth plain to all. And it is a classic and a great one, in weight of matter or thought, and in beauty of form or style, though it is not great in the number or size of its pages. It has been kept for the last and not the least telling proof of the fact that the theologians of our day teach that love for God is easy and common. The author is a Jesuit and yet his name has been left out of Somervogel's 10 volume in folio list of Jesuit writers. He is an American and his name does not appear except in one line in the "Catholic Encyclopedia" lately published in America, and his name did not until of late appear even in his own books and it is now unknown even to many of his American brothers of the Jesuit Order. The nature of the book and the circumstances under which its publication was first held back and afterward deliberately and solemnly permitted, will impress the fact which we are proving, on the mind and heart of all, and especially of all who live in America and cherish an honest pride in the greatness of an American. For the foregoing reasons we take keen pleasure in being the first to bring out these circumstances in full before the public. This catechetical chat admits with propriety a familiar story, and now we will tell our readers the true story of the little classic to which we refer, namely, "God Our Father," by Florentine Boudreaux, S. J.

What is the aim of the whole of this little book? It is to show that any one can love God if he can be led to look on Him, not as an angry judge—which He is not—but as Our Good Father in heaven—which He is—and that not only great saints but ordinary Christians and even the greatest of sinners can be led to look on God as Our Father in heaven. We will here cite Father Florentine's entire preface, which is very short. From this brief specimen, our readers may wish for more of such sweetness and desire to peruse the whole book and see for themselves what is its aim and note a hint at the facts which we said we are so glad to be the first to bring out in full before the public.

“PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

“In presenting this little book to the public the author would express his grateful thanks for the very favorable manner in which ‘The Happiness of Heaven’ was received. The little treatise now presented was the author's first attempt at book writing, but circumstances did not then permit the publication. These no longer existing, he presents it to the same kind public, begging for it a share of the charitable indulgence extended to the other.

“Though written principally to meet the wants of a certain class of pious people, it should not be inferred that they alone can derive profit from its perusal. Indeed, it is hoped that all without exception will be benefited by viewing God as their Father. Even the poor sinner, who has almost lost hope, will recover it and return to his Christian duties as soon as he becomes convinced that God is a Father, ready to receive him and to forgive all his sins. Should even one such be brought back to the bosom of our heavenly Father, the author will feel himself abundantly rewarded for all his toil.

“St. Louis University, St. Louis, Mo.  
“Christmas Day, 1872.”

The circumstances which had not permitted the publication, but which afterward ceased to exist, are not only an amusing page from the curiosities of the history of American literature but also an apodictic argument to prove the fact that the theologians of our day are unanimous in teaching that love for God is easy.

Who was Florentine Boudreaux? He was one of nine children who in very early life had been left orphans by the untimely death of their parents in Terrebonne Parish, down

in the Louisiana Lowlands, where the name of Boudreaux is legion. But the boys Isidore, Arsenius, and Florentine were befriended by Father Delacroix and Bishop de Neckère of New Orleans and sent for their education to the University of St. Louis, Missouri.

There Isidore was a faithful and successful student, and entered the Society of Jesus and became famous for sanctity and learning. He was master of novices at Florissant during the extraordinarily long term of twenty-three years from 1857 to 1880, during which time he impressed the stamp of his own soul on the religious lives of generation after generation of stalwart western Jesuits. But during the years that Florentine's name figures on the roll of students at the college of St. Louis, it never once appears in the catalogue on the roll of honor, even for a premium for penmanship or good conduct or encouragement. As he said himself, he there picked up much knowledge from the good lay-brothers who did the cleaning, cooking, carpentering, and plumbing around the college, but he learned next to nothing from any one of his teachers in the class-rooms. After leaving college, he worked for a while on his uncle's farm near Kaskaskia, Illinois, but the restive youth found the farm routine as dull and distasteful as the previous routine at college. In the next scene of the drama of his life he appears at St. Louis at the age of twenty in the costume of an apprentice to a St. Louis tinsmith, and his face beams with joy in the hope of himself soon being a full-fledged tinker. He is traveling from place to place and satisfying his restless spirit with continuous change of residence and ever new adventures and strenuous and constant exercise of his exuberant youthful muscles. Latterly he has even been trusted as worthy to work at soldering the copper on the roof of the Capitol of the State of Missouri at Jefferson City. But somehow and by what means Florentine could never explain to himself, on January 25, 1841, the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul on the road to Damascus, he, too, is startled by a flash of light from heaven, by which his whole soul is overpowered and humbled. Previously he had felt a settled dislike for his former teachers as the foes of his fun, and he had hated their kind of life. And now he suddenly yearns to live with them and like them in order to

consecrate himself to Our Lord and the salvation of souls, and as St. Peter had left all things—namely, his fisherman's boat and nets—so Florentine, too, is willing to part with all things—namely, his tinker's tools and his ambition to be a tinker. He is prompt in responding to grace and immediately walks into the room of Father Vanderhagen, then vice-provincial and also vicar-general, and applies to be enlisted as a soldier of Christ in the Company of St. Ignatius. But the former college boy and his record are known only too well to the vice-provincial, who receives Florentine's application with a convulsion of laughter.

However, the erstwhile fun-loving boy tells the venerable Jesuit dignitary that this is no laughing matter and insists on now being taken seriously and given a hearing. And Florentine appears so earnest and so changed from his former thoughtless and worldly self, that the vice-provincial finally remembers St. Ignatius seeing in the mischievous runaway boy page, Peter Ribadeneira, the making of a future learned and holy apostolic man, and on February 2, 1841, he personally conducts him to Florissant as a Jesuit novice. The vice-provincial had previously examined him, but in spite of his years passed in the Latin grammar classes at college, the youth had been found ignorant of the first Latin declension—unable even to decline *rosa-rosæ*. And now he has little time to study, between the hours of prayer and manual work and the other exercises of the novitiate. But he takes deep interest in the daily spiritual instructions of the Father Master, then accustomed to be given in Latin, and after five months he is conversing in Latin with ease; and at the end of twelve months he writes a long epistle in elegant Latin to the Father Vice-Provincial. In after years it was noticed that one of his favorite relaxations was reading Cicero between his sports and pranks and jokes with his boys, over whom he did duty as prefect in the yard. His novitiate completed, during which he has acquired a remarkable theoretic and practical knowledge of solid humility and true charity, which virtues are the characteristics of his whole after life, he is sent to Cincinnati, where he is entrusted with one of the lowest classes of small boys and the assistant prefectship. But in the year 1847 he is promoted to be the assistant of Father Frederick Garesché

in the class of chemistry and afterward, for twenty-six years, he teaches this branch with brilliant success at Cincinnati, St. Louis, Bardstown, Santa Clara, and San Francisco.

He has the gift of popularizing the principles of his science in public lectures and experiments and in exhibitions given by his students and he can not understand how nearly all of his boys do so well in their examinations with only Florentine Boudreaux to teach them. His name becomes conspicuous all over the United States through advertisements on walls, fences, etc., of Boudreaux' Pills, Boudreaux' Iron Water, Boudreaux' Cordial, etc., etc., patents for which, donated to certain Catholic hospitals, realized handsome revenues for the benefit of the hospital Sisters and their sick and poor.

During his tertianship he came East to assist in some great missions. In them his rôle was secondary, but those who saw him say that there was something about him that struck all at first sight and that he was a man that no one could ever forget. This was all the more remarkable as he appeared alongside of Father Smarius, whose personality and presence were so distinguished.

However, he always remained a southern country boy with the ways which he had brought to St. Louis University from Terrebonne Parish in the Louisiana Lowlands. He had singular love for the Society of Jesus as his mother and almost adored his grave brother Isidore, and Isidore, too, ever beamed with tenderness in Florentine's company. But a novice of Isidore's tells us that the prudent Father Master, though always so glad to have Florentine with him on a visit at Florissant, during these visits never once for a moment trusted out of his sight his stocky, soldierly, *enfant terrible* of a younger brother, lest he might say or do something which would shock the *clairvoyant* and tender and easily scandalized novices. Florentine's whole curriculum of dogmatic and moral theology had been run in the short course of one year and six months!

And such is the author who hands in for publication to the Father Provincial and through him to the Missouri censors of books, "God Our Father," which teaches that love for God is easy not only for all good Christians but also for any one of the most down-hearted sinners. It is no wonder that this

first attempt at book-writing of Florentine Boudreaux was returned to the Provincial by the censors, with their recommendation that its publication be forbidden. What are the names of the judges who constituted this secret tribunal? History does not tell us. What were the reasons of their unfavorable judgment? Was it that the book contradicts the rigorism of some popular larger catechisms and of many books of devotion and of certain sermons by celebrated orators? Or was it that it was thought improper to allow Father Florentine, from Terrebonne-down in the Louisiana Lowlands, to stand out before the world as a theologian representing the Society of Jesus on a question which had been agitating the greatest Catholic minds for centuries and on which not a few able writers had gone astray and been condemned by the Holy See? Or was it the style of the book, which is so much like the man, with the artless ways and words which he brought from his home as a country boy from the South and which he kept unchanged throughout all the stages of his life as college lad, farmer's boy, tinsmith's apprentice, novice, scholastic, professor of chemistry, and missionary, and venerable pastor?

Whether it was any one of these reasons or all of them and others besides that determined the minds of the unknown censors to condemn "God Our Father," history does not tell us. But the fact of the condemnation is certain and it is not a thing to be wondered at. However, some might wonder why Father Florentine did not give up book-writing forever, after this rude check on his first attempt. He tells us that he had written the book originally to meet the needs of a certain class of downcast pious souls. But the whole truth is that before writing the book he had thought it out originally to meet the needs of the individual downcast soul of Florentine Boudreaux. While pastor of St. Xavier's parish at Cincinnati, he had, time and again, written down among the parochial announcements a request for prayers for the speedy death of one too miserable to live, and it afterward came to light that this one was himself.

He had made a long and deep study of the goodness of God Our Father in order to dissipate the clouds of the dark night of the soul through which he had passed during many years of secret anguish. And now that through the realization



of the simple truth that God is Our Father he has found unbroken peace and regained in his old age all the former joy of his buoyant youth, he thinks only of proving his gratitude for God's long series of signal goodnesses to Florentine and of sharing this spiritual Boudreaux's Cordial with other souls who may be suffering from the same sickness and anguish. It was noted that all through his whole life, he could never bear to see any one in pain, and during his walks on the crowded streets if he ever met a child in tears he always made his protesting companion wait for him until he had turned the child's weeping into smiles and laughter. Therefore, with the humility and charity which have marked his whole career, even after the first-born of his genius has been officially branded by his superiors as unworthy to show its face in public, he sets to work and writes the "Happiness of Heaven," and bravely hands it in to the Provincial to be censored. And this time the former boy whose name had never been allowed to appear on the roll of honor at St. Louis University successfully passes the examination of the severe Missouri censors. The little book is printed, and its circulation quickly surpasses that of any other book of piety ever written in America; and the critics, all the world over, hail it as one of the most remarkable books of the nineteenth century. And now Father Tom O'Neil, Provincial of the Jesuits of Missouri and Father Florentine's life-long comrade and friend, feels that it is in order to take an appeal against the sentence of the Missouri censors which had halted the publication of "God Our Father," and he forwards the manuscript through Father Joe Kellar of Missouri, but now Provincial of Maryland, to be censored by the professors of Woodstock College, as the highest tribunal of learning among the Jesuits of the United States. And Father O'Neil quickly gets back "God Our Father" from the East, not only with the approval, but also with the highest commendations of the Woodstock faculty, which, by the way, was then attracting the admiring attention of all the Catholic universities of the world.

No one was more surprised at these compliments from this quarter than Father Florentine himself. And only those who have had the good fortune of intimately knowing big-minded and big-hearted Tom O'Neil can picture the look

on his strong face as he takes his pen in his hand to indict the following document :

"I, Thomas O'Neil, Provincial of the Society of Jesus in Missouri, in virtue of power granted to me by the Very Reverend P. Beckx, Superior General of the same Society, hereby permit the publication of a book entitled 'God Our Father,' by a Father of the Society of Jesus, the same having been approved by the censors appointed to revise it.

"THOMAS O'NEIL, S.J.

"St. Louis, Mo., 8 Dec. 1872."

Now here is the hinge on which our present argument turns and here the reader will see that the detailed narration of the preceding facts is not irrelevant to our subject. For who were the professors of the faculty at Woodstock shortly before December 8, 1872, the date of this first public approval of "God Our Father"? In the catalogue of the Maryland Province of that year, 1872, we find at Woodstock among others the names of A. de Augustinis, B. Sestini, C. Mazzella, C. Maldonado, and D. Pantanella. To which ones of the members of this supreme court of appeal did Father Keller commit the matter of the approval or reversal of the sentence which had been passed by the inferior court of Missouri censors? As this was an appeal and the reversal went out before the Society of Jesus in the name of Woodstock, it is not too much to suppose that the case was referred officially, or at least semiofficially, to each one of the professors above named. Anyhow, at least two favorable votes were required, and we know that at least that number was had, for Father O'Neil states as a fact that the book had been approved by the censors in the plural. But whether all of these eminent theologians, or less than all, but more than two, or only two had been appointed as censors to revise the book, it is absolutely certain that the prefect of studies, or dean of the faculty, was one of those appointed, and this one was Camillus Mazzella; and he not only affirmed that the teachings in "God Our Father" are not against Catholic truth or the good of souls but also most highly commended Father Boudreaux's presentation of these teachings as accurate, able, and timely.

Now who was Camillus Mazzella? Some of our readers may not know that he was one of the most renowned theo-

logians whom we have ever had in America and that it was a special providence that we had him here at that time. His Eminence James Cardinal Gibbons is often said to be the most widely and highly esteemed and best loved American citizen now living in our great country. Only a short while ago we saw him honored by such numerous and mighty civic dignitaries as no other churchman has been known in our age to gather around himself anywhere in the world. But the exceptional honors which he receives are equalled by his modesty. And we have the happiness of knowing him so well that we feel he will not take it as a violation of the sacredness of hospitality, if we print for the public some words of his which with our own ears we have heard His Eminence repeat over and over again in private. These words were: "that Cardinal Mazzella was responsible for the doctrines contained in the 'Faith of Our Fathers.'" Indeed, it was only after the approval and encouragement of Camillus Mazzella at Woodstock that the young bishop of Richmond made his first venture into print with a little work which has been translated into nearly all the living languages of the world and has already had a circulation of over a million copies. And without this first strong impulse of encouragement would we have had either this or the other classics which have since come from the pen of our great American Cardinal?

Is it going too far out of our way to follow the likeness between the Cardinal and Father Florentine? Both writers have the habit of straightway telling the reader what he most wants to know about the subject under consideration. Both have the highest art, that knows how to hide all art under words and illustrations which are the simplest and fittest. Both love to take the kind view of truth and to say truths that are kind to say, and reduce the knowledge and practice of the refinements of the amenities to a real science or fine art, which is the flower of charity and a precious element of true Christian civilization. And all their readers feel that their kindness is not put on for a while for show before the public, but is of a type that can not be put on and is a part of their natures. The Cardinal was born in Baltimore, and worked as a rapidly rising young business man in New Orleans, La., whence he was directed by Father James Duffo, S.J., to St.

Charles, Maryland, to study for the priesthood. And as we have seen, Father Boudreaux was born in Terrebonne (good soil) Parish, La., and worked as a rapidly rising tinsmith in St. Louis, where he received his early education and whither he had been directed by Father Delacroix of New Orleans.

And the great and humble and charitable Irish-American Prince of the Church and the great and humble and charitable French-American son of St. Ignatius, in public and private, and in their writings and life, show the best spirit and manners of the Sweet Sunny South where they first saw the light. As far as our limited reading goes, "God Our Father" seems the most directly practical of all the books which treat the question whether the love for God is easy. For it aims directly and professedly and solely at showing that love for God is easy for all in practice. Thus, as practical, it is also typically American.

But to come back to our argument to show from the circumstances of the approval of "God Our Father" that the doctrine in it is unanimously held by the theologians of our day. Who was Cardinal Mazzella? He was a brilliant young canon of Benevento, whence he entered the Society of Jesus. After a brief review of his studies, which he had made under the famous Father Piccirillo, he received, at Fourvières in Lyons, the rare honor of a Grand Act, or of standing his final examinations on all theology in public against all comers. And he gave such signal proofs of scholarship that he was sent out to our country to lend a new impulse to higher theological studies among the Jesuit scholastics at Georgetown, D. C., and at Woodstock, Md., between the years 1868 and 1880. At Woodstock, in partnership with Father de Augustinis, he published a complete course of dogmatic theology, which work has been the text-book of Woodstock ever since, and which we still see cited and followed on delicate theological points by such princes of theology as Cardinal Casimir Gennari, among many other living theologians. Called from Woodstock to Rome, he was professor and prefect of studies in the Gregorian University; was made a cardinal by Pope Leo XIII, and placed over the Academy of St. Thomas, instituted for the revival of scholastic learning; and made cardinal prefect of the Congregation for Studies, with supervisory

authority over the studies of all the Catholic seminaries and universities of the world; and ably presided over the commission of theologians gathered from varied lands and schools of thought to settle for all time the question of the validity of Anglican ordination; and aided Pope Leo in the composition of several of his historic Encyclicals, etc., etc. While here, he was careful to be naturalized and he carried back to his native Italy a warm love for our people and country and constitution, which he ever looked on as his own, and he often boasted of his title of an American citizen among the European princes, amid whom he moved as a peer.

Such was Cardinal Mazzella. He ought to have known and did know the sense of the Church and of its pastors and theologians. He would not have approved and highly commended a teaching which is not safe and in harmony with the Church. But he did deliberately and solemnly approve the teaching in "God Our Father," that all can love God who can look on Him as a good Father and that even the most downhearted sinner can easily thus look on Him. Therefore, the way in which "God Our Father" was at first forbidden to be published only emphasizes the deliberate way in which its publication was afterward permitted. The argument from these circumstances to show the mind of the theologians and bishops at that time is confirmed by the little book having been translated into Italian, French, Spanish, German, and Flemish, and by its almost innumerable editions, each one with the special approbation of the local bishop. Its first American edition was exhausted in two months after its appearance, and already in 1894, the year of Father Florentine's death, it had passed through six editions in England alone.

With Father Boudreaux we close the list of witnesses to the fact that the teaching that love for God is easy and common, is unanimous among Catholic theologians of our day.

This list is so long that it would be tedious to rename all the authors singly. They come from Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Germany, Belgium, Holland, England, Ireland, and America, and theirs are almost the only manuals of practical theology now found in the hands of theological students old or young either in the preceding countries or in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Australia. We have seen

among them untitled secular priests and canons and bishops and cardinals, with Augustinians, Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits, Vincentians, Redemptorists, and Sulpicians, and they fully represent not only all lands but also all schools of theology. On this point the theologians of our day fraternize with one another and likewise with St. Augustine, the Doctor of Grace or of the means of love for God; St. Bonaventure, the Doctor of seraphic love; St. Thomas, the Doctor of angelic love; St. Francis de Sales, Doctor of supernaturalized human love; St. Alphonsus, the Doctor of divine love as easily learned and practised in the confessional even by the rude masses who might come there from bad habits which had made them callous and blind.

While glorying in such leaders, the theologians tell us that all who believe that love for God is hard and rare, blindly follow as their leaders Baius and Jansenius, who were the offspring of Martin Luther and John Calvin.

The Jansenistic teaching is a spiderlike, tangled web of errors spun out and woven wholly from within the gloomy and cruel Jansenistic brain to catch the minds of the weak-witted and unwary. On the other hand, the teaching that love for God is easy for all is like the luminous wax and the sweet honey gathered and digested by the busy bees of Catholic theology from the essence of the choicest flowers of truths found in the rich gardens of the writings of the Prophets, Apostles, Fathers, Doctors, and Councils.

Indeed, we have seen the theologians holding out this truth to us, not as their own invention but as a clear and close sequence from the Word of God and the teaching of the Church. Not one of them shows any doubt about the certainty of this view; and some bring it out from the classrooms of the seminaries and universities for the instruction and practice of the pious multitudes, and we have seen this truth accepted by the people, pastors, bishops, and Popes of the One Church with whose teaching and belief Our Lord promised to be present all days even to the consummation of the world.

In the past, some of the shepherds of the flock were sometimes asleep when they should have been awake and watching; and the wolf then grew bold, and the error that love for

God is hard and rare then became widespread. But the great Doctors, the great watch-dogs of the Church, were always awake, and their scent and sight were always keen and true, and their hearts were always bold and faithful, and they always barked out loudly and furiously at this false prophet, or ravening wolf that sought to enter the fold under the covering of a sheep. And the successors of Peter, by a special providence, have uniformly loved Jesus more faithfully than the successors of the other apostles and have been each the most faithful in feeding with wholesome food and guarding from noxious herbs all the lambs and all the sheep of Jesus, and they have ever encouraged the great watch-dogs in their barking at this wolf of error. And in our day at least, every one of the Catholic theologians, that is, every one of the lesser watch-dogs, has joined in the barking of the greater shepherd-dogs and every one of the bishops or shepherds has shown his approval of the barking by permitting the above-mentioned text-books to be published in his diocese, or at least to be placed in the hands of his seminarians and priests. Therefore, from this fact, which is as manifest as the sun, our minds are forced to conclude that it is true that love for God is easy and not hard.

Some might here ask us: "Have you put this teaching that love for God is easy before the bishops, priests, brothers, sisters, and people here in America in our day? And if so, how did they take it?" We will be glad to give a full answer to this question, which is a very proper one at this stage of our study, and the answer will be a strong confirmation of the preceding argument and bring its strength close home to the minds of our fellow American Catholics.

On July 3, 1907, in the historic decree known as the "*Lamentabili sane*," the Holy See condemned sixty-five propositions, among which the sixth is as follows:

"In defining truths the learning and the teaching Church work together in such a way that there is nothing left for the teaching Church to do but to ratify the opinions which are common in the learning Church."

This proposition is not only false but absurd on its face and sounds like a joke. It is not according to the injunctions of the Divine Founder of the Church "Go into the whole world

and preach the Gospel to every creature. . . . He that believeth not, shall be condemned," "Teach all nations," "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep," "Confirm thy brethren in the Faith."

However, Our Lord promised that His Holy Spirit of Truth would abide in the whole body of the Church, and, therefore, not only in its head but also in its members united to it. Indeed, there is an absolute promise of infallibility to the Church, as to an edifice on a rock which shall never be shaken, and as to a number of souls who will ever have at their head to strengthen them one for whom Our Lord prayed so efficaciously that Satan will never succeed in sifting him like wheat, or causing his faith to fail; and as to a fold of lambs and sheep all commanded by the God of Truth ever to follow the teaching of Simon Bar-Jona and his successors.

But we know that Pope Pius IX, before defining the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, not only consulted his commission of theologians and each one of the bishops of the whole Church, but also commanded each bishop to find out and report to the Holy See what was the belief of the faithful in his diocese on this privilege of the Mother of God. Hence we see that in defining truths there is something left for the teaching Church to do besides merely ratifying the beliefs which have become common in the learning Church, and yet that these latter beliefs have grave weight with the wisest and highest when they are in search of the true sense of the Word of God delivered to the Church through the written or unwritten messages of the original divine or divinely inspired teachers. In some respects the belief of the bishops and pastors and faithful, in this part of the One True Church, would have special weight with the prudent theologian. For nowhere during the past hundred years has the Holy Father been freer to select the most worthy priests to become our bishops and rulers or freer to correct errors of belief if they existed. Therefore, in reply to the question just asked, we take pleasure in saying that we have personally put this teaching before a goodly number of American archbishops and bishops and priests and brothers and sisters and men and women of the laity, and it is the welcome that it received from them all which has encouraged us to now put it before the reading public in print. Here in New York, in



our theological conferences on many occasions, papers were read in which this teaching was stated and defended and in the discussions assistants and pastors and monsignori and vicars-general and His Eminence applauded the teaching with enthusiasm and rarely was one voice heard in objections against its truths or opportuneness. We, ourselves, have preached this truth to bishops and priests in several diocesan retreats and to Sisters of various Orders in dozens of retreats or triduums, and to the people of the parishes of St. Ignatius Loyola and St. Francis Xavier, New York, in a series of evening instructions, and the doctrine has always been received with welcome. From one convent came a card at New Year's returning a thousand thanks, from another the announcement: "All love God here," while the Sisters of a cloistered Order asked how any one who has a little knowledge of Our Lord can help making acts of love and what is the need of *proving* that love for God is easy? A pastor in the lower East Side of New York City repeated the points of a paper which he had heard in the theological conference to his sodality of boys and they responded that hereafter they would all make acts of perfect contrition and the pastor believed that they would in fact. A pastor from a factory town said that many of his pious factory girls daily make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament or spend a half-hour or whole hour in making the Way of the Cross in the church as a rest for their souls after their long, hard day's work, and that he is certain that most of them, throughout all these devotions, dwell on Our Lord's goodness almost exclusively, and that love for God in them is so habitual and spontaneous as to be a second nature. And this pastor is one who is looked up to as a most prudent and zealous priest.

Another pastor, after hearing the proofs that love for God is easy and the explanations of the nature and degrees of love and the saying of Cardinal Gotti that love is in the will, where it may easily exist without our noticing its presence, recalled to us the following well-known passage from Molière's comedy, "The Upstart":

*"Philosopher.* All that is not prose is verse, and all that is not verse is prose.

*"M. Jourdain.* And what we talk, what then is that?

"*Philosopher.* It's prose.

"*M. Jourdain.* What! When I say, 'Nicole, bring me my slippers and give me my nightcap,' that is prose?"

"*Philosopher.* Yes, sir.

"*M. Jourdain.* By my faith, it is more than forty years that I have been talking prose without in any way knowing it."

And this venerable pastor said that for more than forty years he himself had been loving God without in any way knowing it and it was such a joy to have now made the discovery. And on second thought he even said that his conversations with God for forty years had not been only the prose of fear and hope but also the *poetry* and *music* of love and he gloated over this new knowledge even more than did M. Jourdain over the new knowledge that he had been talking prose.

Such is the sense of Catholics in America as we know it partially at first hand. Other priests have made it a point systematically to spread the light of this truth and their observations have been wider than our own, and they report that wherever it has been taught and explained it has been received with open hearts by clergy and people.

If some one of our readers can spare the time to read only one chapter of our book we beg that he select this one on the teaching of the theologians. Whether we are trained or untrained in theology we have misgivings about our ability to interpret the texts of the Scriptures, Fathers, or Councils and to draw conclusions about the facility or difficulty of the acts of love. Yet we have no such misgivings about the ability of approved theologians, and their teachings are the easiest practical means of satisfying our minds on this question.

We might safely and securely rest our whole case here on this first proof alone, for we feel that by it the minds of our Catholic readers have reached the point of certitude and now cling with firm assent to the known truth that love for God is easy and common and are conscious of no reasonable doubt or of any fear of ever being driven or shaken from their present strong and strongly fortified position by any kind or number of harassing objections or puzzling difficulties which may be arrayed and thrown forward to attack or undermine it. But at least in some respects, certitude admits of degrees and our conviction is now deep, but it may become deeper; and our

minds are certain and secure but may become more so, and we who now cling closely and firmly to known truth and have shut out all reasonable doubts or fears of mistake, may come to cling more closely and firmly to better known truth and by further proofs shut out absolutely all fears and even the slightest tremors or quivers which might cause a momentary hesitation in the practice of love for God.

Even after we have become certain of the wisdom and goodness of our Holy Father by the testimony of two or more of our friends who have seen Him often and are known to be prudent and truthful, we welcome new testimonials and every precious corroborating circumstance in His favor and besides we love to see Him and know Him ourselves, and thus our certainty of His benignity is stronger and more real and stirs our hearts to more loyal affection and our wills to readier and steadier action in His service. And we can never know too much about God, who makes it easy for us to love Him and be loved by Him, which truth lies at the base of our spiritual life and we welcome new lights on it from every direction. Hitherto, we have viewed this truth as a jewel in the hands of the theologians as experts telling us that it is genuine and showing us many of its sparkling sides, while testing it under the direct sunlight of God's Word in Scripture and tradition and under the reflection of this light in the moonbeams of the Church's exposition of God's Word.<sup>1</sup>

But now we love to take this jewel from the hands of the theologians into our own and to turn it around and around ourselves and to see all of its brilliant sides, not from far but from near and to gaze at all its lustrous rays spread out as when the golden sunrays are spread out into the varied colors of the rainbow.

From gazing longer and closer at this jewel of truth, we will be readier to utter the prayer: "Give me Thy love and Thy grace and I am rich enough." And many of us will make bold to add: "Thou *hast* given me the priceless pearl of Thy love and Thy grace and I *am* rich enough without all things outside of Thee, but the joy and peace I feel from the

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<sup>1</sup>The Roman Breviary in the responsory after the eighth lesson of the Common of the Apostles says, "by their teaching the Church shines as the moon by the sun."

possession of Thy love and Thy grace now embolden me as a loving and confiding child and friend to beg for a higher degree of Thy love and Thy grace." And we will be readier to say not only "I believe, help my unbelief," but also "I love Thee, make me love Thee more and more."

For these motives, therefore, we will not stop here and rest our whole case on one proof, but without tiring of concentrating our thoughts on this sweet and useful truth, we will go on heaping authority on authority and reason on reason, and explanation on explanation, and gaining greater and more certain knowledge of this highest thing. For indeed, the proposition to be proved is not that *Giuseppe Sarto*, who from a peasant has become Pope, is not only lovable but accessible and affable to high and low, but that Infinite Majesty who from God became man is ever inviting us to an audience and continually holding out to us the glad right hand of fellowship and partnership, and is so truly magnetic that this mysterious attraction all but forces us to give Him our own hand and heart.

## CHAPTER IV

*THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES OF ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA  
MANIFEST THE TRUTH OF OUR PROPOSITION  
THAT ACTS OF PERFECT LOVE AND PER-  
FECT CONTRITION ARE EASY AND  
COMMON*

**T**HIS chapter is closely kin to the foregoing. There we saw that the theologians of our day and generation teach unanimously, outspokenly, and unhesitatingly that perfect love and contrition are easy and common; and we saw that this teaching of theirs is equivalently that of the Church and is, therefore, true. And here we will see that this is likewise the outspoken and unhesitating teaching of St. Ignatius and that this teaching of his is also equivalently that of the Church and therefore true.

No Jesuit theologian has ever attacked one word of the book of the Spiritual Exercises as untrue. Many of them have believed and defended that St. Ignatius wrote them under the influence of divine inspiration in the strict sense. The greatest authors of the Order have followed the simple maxims of St. Ignatius as their guides when they wrote some of their most elaborate treatises on dogmatic theology. These treatises are a considerable part of the body of Catholic literature and were published with the approval of the Church in the sense explained above, and the approval by the Church of Jesuit theological works was often also an approval of the doctrines in the Spiritual Exercises.

Since the date of the first publication of the Spiritual Exercises, few, if any, books have had so many public commentators. And these commentaries on the text of St. Ignatius have likewise been published only with the approval of the ecclesiastical authorities, that is, of the bishops or the Holy See.

Not only Jesuits, who are a numerous body, but also many other preachers have used the text of the Spiritual Exercises as the groundwork of sermons, triduum, novenas, retreats, or

missions preached to the clergy or people. Here again we see an approval of the Church in accepting these spoken words. Men like St. Charles Borromeo and St. Francis de Sales, who were full of the spirit of God and of His wisdom and holiness, have proclaimed that this little book was more precious to them than all the great tomes of their libraries, and that it had converted more souls than it has letters on its pages.

The scholarly Leo XIII said that he had searched in vain for a book of piety that would at the same time satisfy his intelligence while inflaming his will until he found the opening words of the Spiritual Exercises on the principle or foundation.

We have before us an English translation of the Exercises printed in London in the year 1847. We transcribe the following words from its preface, written by Right Rev. Nicholas Wiseman, D.D., then Bishop of Melipotamus and Coadjutor of the Midland District of England. It is dated at St. Mary's College, Feast of the Sacred Heart, 1847. Few readers need to be reminded that this Bishop was afterward the great Cardinal.

"There are many books from which the reader is taught to expect much, but which perused yield but little profit. Those are few and most precious which at first sight and on slender acquaintance seem to contain but little; but the more they are studied, the more instruction, the more solid benefit they bestow; which are like a soil that looks bare and unadorned but contains beneath its surface rich treasures that must be digged out and drawn from a great depth.

"To this class I know no book that so justly belongs as the little work here presented to the public. The word of God in His Holy Scriptures is beyond everything else that has been written, in this, that without, it is all fair, and within all rich; that it is perfect to the eye that looks for beauty and to the understanding that seeks for hidden wisdom.

"In the Exercises of St. Ignatius, on the other hand, many will no doubt be disappointed when for the first time they look into them. They have heard of the wonderful effects which they have produced, of the innumerable conversions which they have wrought, of the spiritual perfection to which they have led, and they will see in the text itself nothing but simplicity of form, plainness of sentiment and diction, hints often rather than explanations, germs of thought rather than developments, skeletons often more than perfect forms, sketches instead of pictures—no poetry, no emotions, no high-flown ideas, no enthusiastic aspirations; but maxims of eternal import inculcated with the calmness of a philosopher; the sternest truths delivered as

obvious and self-demonstrating propositions; the sublimest moral lessons of the Gospel, self-denial, renunciation of the world, contempt of life, perpetual continency, and blind obedience, taught as simple virtues attainable to any Christian. And yet throughout there is a manifest conviction of the adequacy of the means to the end, in the writer's mind. There is nothing experimental, nothing optional, nothing left to be discovered. But every method is laid down as certain, every result reckoned on as sure.

"It is a plan framed by a master-mind (unless we admit a higher solution) capable of grappling with perhaps the most arduous and complicated task, and without overlooking a difficulty, and apparently without proportionate means, confident of its success. A man is presumed to enter into the course of the Spiritual Exercises in the defilement of sin, under the bondage of every passion, wedded to every worldly and selfish affection, without a method or rule of life; and to come out from them restored to virtue, full of generous and noble thoughts, self-conquering and self-ruling, but not self-trusting, on the arduous path of Christian life. Black and unwholesome as the muddy water that is poured into the filter, were his affections and his soul; bright, sweet and healthful as the stream that issues from it, they come forth. He was as dross when cast into this furnace and is pure gold when drawn from it."

In these last words the great cardinal openly teaches as his own doctrine and that of the Exercises that the great sinner can easily be led to love God. In the whole passage he renders ample testimony to the truth of each maxim of the Exercises and more than hints that he strongly suspects that they were revealed to their saintly author.

But we do not need any of the foregoing considerations or testimonials to satisfy ourselves that the book of the Exercises has the approval of the whole Church. If any reader has this edition of the English translation he may read the following decisive testimonials among the preliminary documents prefixed to the text of St. Ignatius:

"Paul III, Pope, for a perpetual memory of the thing. The care of the pastoral office committed to us over the whole flock of Christ, and the love of the glory and praise of God, cause us to embrace those things which help the salvation and spiritual advancement of souls; and when persons ask us anything which may serve to foster and nourish piety in Christ's faithful people, to admit their prayers to a favorable hearing. Since, therefore, as our beloved son, the most noble Francis Borgia, Duke of Gandia, has lately caused to be set forth to us, our beloved son Ignatius of Loyola, Father-General of the Company of Jesus, established by us in our blessed city and confirmed by us with our Apostolic authority, has composed certain

Spiritual Instructions or Exercises, drawn from the Holy Scriptures and the experience of the spiritual life, and reduced them to a method excellently adapted to move to piety the minds of the faithful; and since the aforesaid Duke Francis has not merely learned by report brought from many places, but also ascertained by the clear proof of experience, as well at Barcelona as at Valentia and at Gandia, that these exercises are eminently useful and wholesome to Christ's faithful people, for spiritual consolation and advancement; wherefore the same Duke Francis has caused an humble supplication to be made to us that in order that the fruit of the aforesaid Spiritual Instructions and Exercises may be the more widely extended and more of Christ's faithful people invited to use them with greater devotion, we would vouchsafe of our Apostolic benignity to have them examined; and if we found them worthy of approbation and praise, to approve and praise them, and otherwise to arrange in a fitting manner concerning the premises: We, therefore, having had the said Instructions and Exercises examined, and having learned by the testimony and account of our beloved son, John of the title of St. Clement, Cardinal Priest, Bishop of Burgos and Inquisitor of heretical depravity; and our venerable brother Philip, Bishop of Salucia and Vicar-General in Spirituals of our said city; as also of our beloved son Giles Foscarari, Master of the Sacred Palace; to us thereupon made; that being replete with piety and holiness, they are and will be highly useful and wholesome for the edification and spiritual advancement of the faithful; and having also due regard, not without reason, to the abundant fruits which Ignatius and the aforesaid Company by him instituted cease not to yield in every part of the Church of God, and to the very great help which the afore-mentioned Exercises have furnished thereto; receiving favorably such supplications, do, by the aforesaid authority, by the tenor of these presents, of *our certain knowledge, approve, praise, and with the defense of the present writing fortify the aforesaid Instructions and Exercises and all and their singular contents*; exhorting very much in the Lord all and each of Christ's faithful people of both sexes, wheresoever situated, that with a devout will they will use these so pious Instructions and Exercises, and *by them be taught.*

"Given at Rome, at St. Mark's, under the fisherman's ring, on the last day of July, in the year one thousand five hundred and forty-eight, of our Pontificate the fourteenth.

"Bld. El. Fulginen."

The following are the testimonials of those to whom the censorship of the Exercises was committed:

"We have read all the contents arranged in this volume and they have pleased us very much and appeared eminently conducive to the salvation of souls.

CARDINALIS BURGENSIS."



"We give permission that this work, worthy of all praise and very profitable for the Christian profession, may be printed.

PHILIPPUS VICARIUS."

"Exercises so holy can not but be of the greatest advantage to any one who applies himself to them. They are therefore to be embraced even with open arms.

F. ÆGIDIUS FOSCARARIUS,  
Magister Sacri Palatii."

Is the above document of Pope Paul III a Bull? No. It does not begin as do Bulls, with the longer formula, "Paul, Bishop, servant of the servants of God," but with the briefer formula, "Paul III, Pope." Above all, at the end, it is not given under the stamp or bulla containing the images of both St. Peter and St. Paul, but only under the seal of the Fisherman's Ring, which contains the image of St. Peter alone in the act of fishing. Therefore, this pronouncement of the Pope was issued not in the most solemn form of a Bull, but in the less solemn form of a Brief. Therefore, this pronouncement by its mere form does not manifest that Paul III in it made use of all of his Apostolic authority with all of its intensity. The Popes beatify in a Brief, but canonize in a Bull. Experts tell us that Popes never use the form of a Bull on a doctrinal matter unless they wish to manifest their intention of speaking *ex cathedra* and strictly defining. However, the Pope does here manifest that he speaks as head of the whole Church and *to* the whole Church. This will be clear to any one who reads the first words of the Brief. Moreover, many of the matters treated in the Exercises plainly pertain to doctrine, and the Pope issues the document for a perpetual memorial of the matter, as he tells us in so many words. The document thus has great teaching authority, though not the highest possible.

The approval of the Pope is here not "*in forma communi*" but "*in forma specifica*."

This approval is not a mere act of the Master of the Sacred Palace or of the vicar-general of Rome or of the cardinal prefect of the Supreme Congregation of the Inquisition with the permission of the Pope. It is an act of the successor of the Fisherman. Moreover, this approval refers not only to the book in general, but to *each* and *every* maxim contained

in it. This latter form is most extraordinary and rare. Popes may have given such approval to other books, but this is the only case of the kind known to the writer. Now, as we know, especially since the time of Jansenius and his book "Augustinus," Popes have authority to decide infallibly that a certain book teaches falsehood, heresy, etc. And is it not, therefore, equally certain that they have authority to decide infallibly that a certain book does *not* teach anything that is false, heretical, etc.?

It seems to us that any one who is familiar with the usages and style of Rome and with the value of its doctrinal decisions will be satisfied from this Brief, "*Pastoralis officii cura*," that there can not be anything false taught in the Spiritual Exercises. Unless he wishes to cavil, as soon as he sees that a proposition is contained in this book thus approved, he will say to himself, "It is certainly true and I accept it as certain truth."

No loyal and intelligent Catholic doubts the truth of any of the propositions taught by Leo XIII in the Brief "*Rerum Novarum*," on the condition of labor, or in the Brief "*Providentissimus Deus*" on the Sacred Scriptures, and this Brief of Paul III on the praiseworthiness of all and each of the teachings contained in the Spiritual Exercises has a similar doctrinal value, and commends to the Church universally and perpetually as praiseworthy, not only this book as a whole but each one of the maxims contained in it. The Brief does not say formally and explicitly that these maxims are true. However, what is praiseworthy and useful for souls can not be based on what is false, but only on what is pure truth without any admixture of error. Hence the words of the Brief thus do clearly teach that these maxims are true.

From such approvals of each one of the contents of the Exercises, the catholic-minded reader is prepared to grant that acts of perfect love and perfect contrition are easy and common if this proposition is one of the contents of the Exercises. We will now consider the question whether it is, in fact.

How strange if it were not! How particular is each Jesuit priest and scholastic in training each pupil to write the letters L. D. S. at the bottom of each theme and the letters A. M. D. G. at the top. Each theme is thus to be an act begun "for

the greater glory of God,"—"Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam," and followed by the aspiration "praise to God forever"—"*Laus Deo Semper.*" The latter is substantially the same as the Hebrew *Alleluia*, which will be sung eternally in the streets of the Heavenly City, and is manifestly an act of love for God and even one proper for souls blessed with the sight of the divine goodness and beauty. A. M. D. G. expresses the intention not only of doing a duty well to please the divine goodness, but also of doing it in the more perfect manner which will give greater glory and pleasure to God. For nigh four hundred years the thousands of teachers in Jesuit schools have expected from their tens of thousands of small boys, youths, and young men frequent acts of pure and high and practical love for God not only in the chapel but also in the study hall and class room.

In the early seventies of the last century the daily papers were long exercised over the celebrated case of the claimant for the great Tichborne estate in England. The claimant granted that the real heir had been a pupil of the Jesuits in his early years. Charles Russell, afterward Lord Chief Justice, asked this claimant what the letters A. M. D. G. stand for. The latter could not give the right answer, and this ignorance went far in convincing the Court that the claimant had never been a pupil of the Jesuits and could not have forgotten even after long years of wandering and hardship what is so vividly impressed by the Jesuits on every youthful mind under their charge. These phrases, "For the greater glory of God" and "Praise to God forever" are thus inculcated by the Jesuits in imitation of St. Ignatius, who uses them in his writings almost countless times.

The Jesuits read in the refectory every month certain extracts from the Society's constitution written by St. Ignatius. The following is the first rule of that summary :

"Although it be the sovereign wisdom and goodness of God, our Creator and Lord, which is to preserve, govern and advance in His holy service this least Society of Jesus, as it has vouchsafed to begin the same, and *on our part, the interior law of charity and love which the Holy Ghost is accustomed to write and imprint in the hearts of men is to help thereunto*, rather than any exterior constitutions, etc., etc."

From the words italicised by us, it is clear that the Saint recognizes that men in general frequently follow the interior law of love and charity which the Holy Ghost is accustomed (not rarely but commonly) to write and imprint in their hearts.

We read in rule 17:

“Let all endeavor to have a right intention, not only in their state of life, but also in all particulars, seeking in them always sincerely to serve and please the Divine Goodness for Itself and for the charity and singular benefits wherewith it has prevented us, rather than for fear of punishments or hope of rewards (though they ought also to draw profit from these), and in all things let them seek God, casting off, as much as is possible, all love for creatures, that they may place their whole affection on the Creator of them, loving Him in all creatures and them all in Him, according to His most holy and divine will.”

Ignatius looked forward to having numerous sons, and with his singular good sense was far from expecting them all to be saints; and, yet, as we see here, he prescribes that each one will make most frequent acts of love for God above all things. Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, etc., were his contemporaries. They condemned fear of God's punishments and hope for His rewards as bad. He commends them as good and not to be neglected, but commends love as best and to be practised more frequently and almost continuously, and not only in matters of the greatest gravity but also in daily and hourly particulars or details. As we see from the considerations presented in this paragraph it would be strange indeed if the Spiritual Exercises, on which the Constitutions and entire Institute of the Society are grounded, did not contain acts of love and perfect contrition to be made easily and commonly.

On the first page of the book, before the title, “Spiritual Exercises,” we meet the prayer

ANIMA CHRISTI

“Soul of Christ, sanctify me.

Body of Christ, save me.

Blood of Christ, inebriate me.

Water from the side of Christ, wash me.

Passion of Christ, strengthen me.

O good Jesu, hear me;

Within Thy wounds hide me.

Permit me not to be separated from Thee;  
 From the malignant enemy, defend me;  
 In the hour of death, call me,  
 And bid me come to Thee,  
 That with Thy saints I may praise Thee  
 Forever and ever. Amen."

The reader may find an exquisite metrical version of this prayer in Mr. Wilfrid Ward's "Life of Cardinal Newman," who calls this prayer his Credo. It is a lively act of faith and also a tenderly confiding act of hope in Our Lord; but such great faith and hope as we see here could not exist unless they were animated by love for Our Lord in a high degree. And we see this loyal, tender, and ardent love of the soldier-saint for his perfect, loving, Soldier-King explicitly expressed in the closing words, where the final fruit of charity springs forth from the preceding root of faith and blossoms of hope:

"In the hour of death call me,  
 And bid me come to Thee,  
 That with Thy saints I may praise Thee  
 Forever and ever. Amen."

Does the Knight here long to be near his Captain? Yes. Does he expect perfect happiness from this blessed intimacy? Yes. Is his own happiness the predominant reason for his wishing to be next to Him and His saints? No; but that he may praise Him forever and ever. This is pure benevolence, pure friendship, and an act of charity. He wishes to attain heaven for the greater glory of God. According to the well-known and accepted definition, glory is "*clara cum laude notitia*," clear knowledge with praise (of excellence). Moreover, all recognize that to wish the glory of God—this good to God—is pure love of benevolence and friendship. Thence, whenever Ignatius asks the one who is making the Exercises to recite the "Anima Christi," it is the mind of the soldier-saint to put that soul through a drilling in pure love of a high degree, a love that seeks the greater glory of God.

To all, and especially to him who after the vigil of arms hung up his sword at the shrine of our Lady of Monsterrat and set forth on a new life as our Lady's knight, the Hail Mary is an act, not only of faith and hope in her and Our Lord, but also an act of love for them.

As we have often repeated, the Our Father rightly said in

the heart contains many acts of love. We will see each of these three prayers constantly prescribed after the meditations from the beginning to the end of the Exercises and *that often* we will see the Exercises supposing acts of love as easy and common.

Let us again borrow from the preface by Cardinal Wiseman.

"The person who goes through the Exercises is not instructed, but made to act; and this book will not be intelligible apart from this view. The reader will observe that it is divided into four weeks and each of these has a specific object, to advance the exercitant an additional step toward perfect virtue. If the work of each week be thoroughly done, this is actually accomplished.

"The first week has for its aim the cleansing of the conscience from past sin and of the affections from future dangers. For this purpose the soul is made to convince itself deeply of the true end of its being—to serve God and be saved and of the real worth of all else. This consideration has been justly called by St. Ignatius the *principle* or *foundation* of the entire system. No limits are put to the time that may be spent upon this subject. It ought not to be left till the mind is *made up* that nothing is worth aiming at but God and salvation and that to all other things we must be indifferent. They are but instruments or hindrances in the acquisition of these and accordingly they must be treated. It is clear that the person who has brought himself to this state of mind has fully prepared himself for submitting to whatever he may be required to do by God for attaining this end."

Such, then, are the nature and importance of the preamble or principle and foundation of all these Spiritual Exercises. Now what are its first words?

"Man was created for this end—that he might praise and reverence the Lord his God and, by serving Him, at length be saved."

We note the terms "praise," "reverence," "serve." We recall the first three petitions of the Our Father, "hallowed be Thy name," "Thy kingdom come," "Thy will be done."

Now, according to the phrase of Paul III, "Ignatius composed certain Spiritual Instructions or Exercises drawn from the holy Scriptures and the experience of the spiritual life and reduced them to a method excellently adapted to move to piety the minds of the faithful."

Here he sets out to regulate or order all of our desires, to lead us to desire only that which is desirable according to

faith and right reason and to lead us to desire to do in the first place and in the second place and in the third place what faith and reason tell us we ought to desire to do in the first place, in the second place, and in the third place. As we have seen with St. Thomas, Our Lord in the Our Father teaches what to desire in the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh place by the seven petitions arranged in perfect order according to the dignity of each thing asked and desired.

Is it not more than likely that Ignatius in selecting the terms "praise," "reverence," "serve," had under his eye the clauses "hallowed be Thy name," "Thy kingdom come," "Thy will be done"? If so, we have the key to his meaning in the use of the term "praise." It would mean the same as "hallowed be Thy name," and this is an act of purest love. As we have already seen, Ignatius placed the Anima Christi in front of all the pages of the book of Exercises. And we have already seen the sense in which he uses the term "praise" in the closing words of the Anima Christi—

"That with Thy saints I may praise Thee  
Forever and forever. Amen."

We can praise Demosthenes and Cicero as orators, and Homer and Shakespeare as poets, and Cæsar and Napoleon as geniuses of the cabinet or the battlefield, and the assassin for his marksmanship, and the children of the world for their art in making to themselves friends from the Mammon of Iniquity. Not all praise implies love of friendship. The theologians tell us that of itself praise of God is not a part of love for God, but a part of the duty of religion toward God, and that by acts of religion we practise, not charity toward God, by which we give to Him as a second self all that we have and are, but justice, by which we regard Him as a creditor and pay Him a just debt and render Him honor as a tribute justly due to Him. But *can* a lover praise his beloved as one who is good and loving, that is, as a friend? He surely can and only thus praise is the heartiest. It is certain that Ignatius here teaches that man was created by the Lord his God to know Him and love Him and thus give glory to Him and praise Him here on earth.

In other words, the Exercises, in the principle or founda-

tion of the whole system of the book, and in the first line of this principle or foundation, and in the first clause of this first line, exact, as man's first duty to the Lord his God who created him, the praise from love, the fulfilling of the greatest and first commandment, on which all the law and prophets depend. Therefore, according to this Christian master-mind, acts of true, hearty love are not only for the few saints but are easy in practice and common in fact among ordinary souls.

Perhaps some may think that we have labored too lengthily here to establish that Ignatius teaches by the word "praise" that we were made by God out of nothing to His own image and likeness that we might know Him and love Him and serve Him in this world and be forever happy with Him in the next. And perhaps such are right. For what else could he have here taught with the catechisms and the Scriptures before him? We have often mentioned the first words of the first chapter of the catechism treating of the end or purpose for which man was created, and this is the subject treated of here.

"For My glory have I created him (man)" (Isa. xliii. 7); "to His own praise and name and glory." (Deut. xxvi. 19.)

"God made man that he might know the chief good, from knowing love it, by loving possess it, by possessing enjoy it." (St. Augustine in his little work on the knowledge of true life.)

These are a few well-known specimens of many texts from the Scriptures and Fathers, teaching that man was made to give glory to God by knowing and loving and praising him here and hereafter. From these texts of the Fathers, Scriptures, and catechisms we know what Ignatius or any Catholic *must have* taught and meant when treating of the subject of the end of man. Therefore, there was no absolute need for us to labor to show what Ignatius *did* teach and mean when here formally treating of this subject.

The book of the Exercises, before proposing the points for the meditations or exercises of the first week, instructs and trains in the examination of conscience. We here transcribe the passage entitled "A method of general examination," comprehending five portions or points:

"The first point is that we must thank the Lord Our God for the benefits we have received. The second, that we ought to entreat



grace for the knowledge and expulsion of our sins. The third, to ask an account of our soul concerning the sins committed during the present day, searching through the several hours from the time when we rose. And first indeed concerning thought, then concerning speech and deed, in the same order in which it was laid down in the particular examination. The fourth, to ask pardon concerning our faults. The fifth to purpose amendment with the grace of God, and, after all the above, to say the Lord's prayer, *Pater Noster*."

The saint offers this as a method of examination of conscience for all souls, without any discrimination against any as supposedly incompetent to practise it. Does he here suppose that absolutely all souls are competent and able to make acts of perfect love and perfect contrition? Yes, and decidedly and openly. Thankfulness to God for benefits received, gratitude to God known to be infinitely perfect and good and thus worthy of all our love and felt to be supremely loving toward us from the benefits we have received from His loving-kindness—this is not charity or friendship toward God, at least formally and theoretically, but it *is*, virtually and practically. As we have seen with the Holy Scripture, it is charity toward God to love Him, because He loved us first, even when we were sinners, His enemies. And as we have seen with Suarez, the chief way in which we know that God is infinitely good in Himself is from this love for us when we were sinners. Gratitude toward any one is benevolence, pure affection, disinterested love, on account of benefits received by me and given to me for my sake, out of benevolence, pure affection, disinterested love for me. The giver may be a man of base and loathsome character and not worthy of all esteem and love and of my whole-souled friendship. Yet he has shown some intrinsic goodness by his kind act to me, and in proportion to this merits my gratitude. However, the sense of any least benefit received from God naturally and normally awakens in me the sense, not only of God's lovingness toward me, but also of His goodness in Himself. Lehmkuhl often tells us that in practice gratitude toward God is the same as charity or friendship toward Him.

Thus, therefore, Ignatius, in proposing to all who begin to make the examen, an act of gratitude, decidedly and openly supposes that all can easily make an act of love in the proper sense and he likewise proposes to all to say the Our Father at

the end of the examen, and he well knew that this is the act of love taught us by Our Lord Himself.

The first meditation of the first week proposes as subjects the sins of the angels, the sin of Adam and Eve and the sin of one who died after committing his first mortal sin and the case of numbers who perhaps have been cast into hell for sins fewer and lighter than my own.

Let us note the colloquy after these terrifying considerations.

"The colloquy will be made by imagining Jesus Christ to be present before me, nailed to the cross. Let me, therefore, inquire with myself the reason why He, the infinite Creator, vouchsafed to become a creature, and from eternal life to come to temporary death because of my sins. Let me also call myself to account, inquiring what worthy of mention I have hitherto done for Christ, what I am doing now or ought to do; and looking upon Him thus nailed to the cross, let me give utterance to such things as my mind and affection suggest.

"Moreover it is the property of the colloquy to be made similarly to the language of a friend to a friend or of a servant to his master; now by asking some favor, now by accusing myself of some fault, sometimes by communicating my own affairs of any kind and asking counsel or help concerning them. Last of all let the *Pater Noster* be said."

Let us run our eyes over this paragraph. I am to represent myself as actually present on Mount Calvary, kneeling with Magdalen at the foot of the cross. There I am with the horrid heap of my sins, each one of them meriting the punishment of the rebellious angels or of our disobedient first parents, or of the other sinners described in this exercise. There I feel all the precious blood flowing down on me and my sins. One drop is enough to blot out all the sins of the whole world and all of it is shed for me, is mine. Our Lord is my God, whom I have offended and He is my judge, and He is dying that I may receive grace to repent and be pardoned. I inquire with myself the reason why He, the infinite Creator, vouchsafed to become a creature and from eternal life to come to temporary death because of my sins. The only answer is that thus He wished to save me, He loved me and delivered Himself for me. How little I have done and am doing for Christ, out of love for Christ! What will I not do in the future?

I am told that it is proper now for me to speak to Christ as a friend to a friend, as one heartily loving to one heartily loving. If I speak as a servant to a master, I may speak as a loving servant to a master or Lord who is certainly good and loving. When I ask a favor, I should do so as one loving and desirous to be good from one who is good and loving.

When I accuse myself of my faults, I here see their greatest malice is in this, that they are against one so good and loving.

When I communicate my affairs and ask counsel or help, I act like a friend to a friend. A friend keeps no thought secret from his friend. When I say the Our Father, I make many acts of love.

The second exercise of the first week is on the multitude and turpitude of my sins. It has five points.

"The fifth is to break forth into exclamations from a vehement commotion of the feelings, wondering greatly how all creatures (going over them severally) have borne with me so long and even to this time preserved me alive. How the angels bearing the sword of the divine justice have patiently borne with me, guarded me, and even assisted me with their prayers. How the saints have interceded for me. How the sky, the sun, the moon and the other heavenly bodies, the elements, and all kinds of animals and products of the earth, instead of the vengeance due, have served me. How lastly the earth has not opened and swallowed me up, unbarring a thousand hells, in which I might suffer everlasting punishments.

"Lastly, this meditation must be concluded by a colloquy in which I extol the infinite mercy of God, giving thanks to the best of my power, that He has preserved my life up to this day. When proposing for the future the amendment of my life, I shall say once the Our Father."

The third exercise is a repetition of the first and second with the three colloquies which follow:

"The first is made to our Lady, the Mother of Christ, by asking her intercession with her Son and the gaining of the grace necessary to us for three things. First, that we may feel the intimate knowledge and detestation of our sins. Second, that acknowledging and abhorring the perverse order of our actions, we may correct it and rightly order ourselves according to God. Third, that, perceiving and condemning the wickedness of the world, we may recover ourselves from worldly and vain things. These things having been finished let the Hail Mary be said once.

"Let the second colloquy be made in a like manner to Christ our

Lord and Mediator that He may obtain for us those same things from the Eternal Father. At the end will be added the prayer which begins 'Anima Christi.'

"The third is to be made in the same order to God the Father, that He may grant us this threefold grace, and at the end the Our Father is to be said once.

"The fourth exercise is a rumination on the points preceding. The same three colloquies will have also to be added."

"The fifth exercise is a contemplation of hell, and contains after the preparatory prayer and prelude five points and one colloquy.

"The second prelude consists in asking for an intimate perception of the punishments which the damned undergo, *that if at any time I should be forgetful of the love of God*, at least the fear of punishment may restrain me from sins. . . .

"Lastly, the greatest thanks must be given to the same Christ that He has not permitted me to fall into any such destruction, but rather has followed me up even to this day with such great love and mercy. The conclusion will be made by saying the Our Father."

Let us hear St. Thomas in 2.2.q.23 a.9, where he answers the question:

"Whether there are rightly distinguished three degrees of charity—the incipient, the proficient, and the perfect? Charity is distinguished according to the threefold degree of the beginners, those advancing, and the perfect. Because the charity of those beginning consists in recession from sin, of the advancing in the exercise of the virtues, and of the perfect in the fruition of eternal glory. . . . For at first there is incumbent on a man as his principal occupation to recede from sin and resist his concupiscences, which move him to the contrary of charity, and this pertains to the beginners in whom charity is to be nursed and fostered lest it be corrupted. And the second stage follows, that a man principally aim at this that he advance in good. And this occupation belongs to the advancing who aim principally at this, that in them charity be strengthened by increase. And the third stage is that a man aim principally at this, that he cling to God and enjoy Him. And this belongs to the perfect who "desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ." (Philipp. i. 23.)

"As also we see in bodily motion. The first stage is recession from a terminus, the second approach to another terminus, and the third rest in that terminus . . . as every division of continuous things is comprehended under these three, the beginning, the middle, and the end. In those in whom charity begins, although they advance, however, their more principal care is in resisting sins whose attack disquiets them. But afterward, feeling this attack less, they now more securely advance toward the perfect; on the one side doing work and on the other holding their hand on the sword, as is said about the builders of Jerusalem. (2 Esdras iv.) The perfect also advance in charity, but this is not their principal care but that

they may cling to God. Although this is sought also by those who are beginning and by those who are advancing, yet these feel greater solicitude about other things, the beginners about avoiding sins, and the advancing about progress in the virtues."

Here St. Thomas, with whom all sound theologians and spiritual writers agree on this point, explains the difference and distinction (denied by Molinos the quietist) between the purgative, illuminative, and unitive ways. His reasons and authority dissipate the fancy of some that acts of love are only for those who have already passed through the purgative way or beginning of the spiritual journey and have advanced through the illuminative by long practice of all the virtues and with their souls long perfectly cleansed and illumined rest in the quiet fruition of perfection. The preceding extracts from the principle or foundation and the first week of the exercises show St. Ignatius in his method to be in perfect accord with St. Thomas. As we have heard from Cardinal Wiseman, a man is supposed to enter into the course of the Spiritual Exercises in the defilement of sin, under the bondage of every passion, wedded to every worldly and selfish affection. As St. Ignatius expresses it in the first prelude of the first exercise of this first week, "We see our soul in this corruptible body as confined in a prison and man himself in this vale of misery an exile among brute beasts." In the third point of the second exercise he says, "Let me look at the corruption of my whole self, the wickedness of my soul and the pollution of my body and account myself to be a kind of ulcer or boil from which so great and foul a flood of sins, so great a pestilence of vices, has flowed."

And yet, as every one sees without further commenting by us, St. Ignatius supposes and expects in such souls, just risen from all manner of numerous and heinous sins, true and intense and frequent acts of perfect love and perfect contrition.

Does he suppose more intense and frequent acts of love and contrition in the second, third, and fourth weeks? Yes. But this does not disprove that he supposes and expects acts of love and contrition also in the first.

In the eighteenth of the twenty annotations preceding the exercises proper, the Saint lays down some rules to guide the

exercitant or him who gives the exercises to another. He here says:

"If he who gives the exercises perceives the other to be of a weak nature and of little capacity, whence no great result and fruit can be hoped, it will be better to prescribe him some of the lighter exercises up to the confession of sins, afterward to give him some examinations of conscience and a plan of more frequent confession, in order that by these means he may be able to preserve the proficiency or gain which his soul has already obtained. But he will not go on to rules concerning elections or any other exercises than those of the first week, especially when there are present others who may be exercised with more fruit and the shortness of time does not admit of his doing everything for all."

Ignatius here expressly affirms that even those of a weak nature and little capacity may be counted upon to reap the fruits proper to the exercises of the first week, and, as we have seen, these fruits are true, intense, and frequent acts of perfect love and contrition.

In order to reap the fruits proper to the second, third, and fourth weeks, are extraordinary previous enlightenments, piety, or other virtues supposed by the Saint? We can find no hint of any such supposition in any word of the Saint whether in the exercises or elsewhere. He does suppose that there is not extraordinary dullness of mind or weakness of character, and that there is ordinarily diligent application of the memory, understanding and will. And with these to what acts of love he exhorts! We can see this clearly from very brief considerations.

The second week opens with a contemplation of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ from the similitude of an earthly king calling out his subjects to war. This soldier king thus harangues his comrades:

"I propose to subject to my power all the countries of the unbelievers. Whosoever, therefore, chooses to follow me, let him be prepared to use no other food, clothing, or other things than what he sees me use. He must also persevere in the same labors, watchings, and other difficulties with me, that each may partake of the victory and felicity in proportion as he shall have been a companion of the labors and troubles."

As we have seen, all the exercises and all the life of the soul are built on the primary truth like a house on the founda-

tion, are drawn from it like a science from its first principles, and are contained in it like a tree in its germ. And this contemplation of the Kingdom of Christ is the foundation, principle, and germ of the second and third weeks.

In the second week we contemplate the virtues practised by Our Divine Lord in the many scenes of His life from His Incarnation to His Passion. In the third week we contemplate the more heroic manifestations of His virtues seen in His passion and death.

In both weeks we are led to love each one of these virtues and even to love the violence to be done to our selfish pride and sensuality, the mortification and self-denial so useful or necessary for the practice of these virtues. What is the motive constantly proposed to induce us to love these virtues and the means of practising them? It is pure, loyal love for Our Lord, love to be like Him who underwent so many pains and humiliations out of love for us in the practice of these virtues.

We are led by the fundamental contemplation of the heavenly King calling us His soldiers, to war, to love Him and His cause and a share of His combats. And His cause is the practice of all the virtues, and His combats are fighting our own pride and sensuality.

The fourth week opens with a contemplation of Jesus Our Lord after His resurrection appearing to our Lady, His holy Mother. Its third prelude contains the grace to be asked, namely, "that we may participate the immeasurable joy of Christ and His Mother." As the contemplation of the Kingdom of Christ was the foundation, principle, and germ of the second and third weeks, so this prelude is the dominant note of the fourth week and of every one of its exercises. There the voice of the Soldier called us to war; here the voice of a woman calls us to the peace and rest of intense joy and gladness in the victory and triumph and joy and gladness of her soldier Son. Our hate for sin and love for the virtues are to be greater than in the three weeks before, but our chief and immediate aim now is to participate the joy and gladness of the Son, to look on Him as a friend, a second self, and His well-being as our well-being, even as His Mother looked on the glory of her Son as her own. This Mother's love is certainly true and pure love, and its imitation is supposed and

expected by St. Ignatius in each soul at each step of the exercises of the fourth week.

As love for God is the end and fullness of the law, so St. Ignatius has placed at the close of the book of Exercises his celebrated "Contemplation for arousing spiritual love." We here insert his text in its completeness. It may be novel to many readers who have seen only popularized editions and are not familiar with this simple sweet old melody which has often been obscured by notes and comments and amplifications introduced after the manner of accompaniments and variations:

"In the first place, two things must be noted.

"The first, that love itself turns more on deeds than on words.

"The second, that love consists in the mutual communication of powers, possessions, and works, as of knowledge, riches, honor, and good of whatsoever kind.

"The prayer is placed at the beginning as usual.

"The first prelude is to see myself standing before the Lord, the angels and all the saints, they being propitious to me.

"The second, to entreat the grace of God, whereby, perceiving the greatness of His benefits conferred upon me, I may spend my whole life in<sup>1</sup> love, worship, and service of Him.

"Let the first point be to recall to memory the benefits of Creation and Redemption; in like manner to recount particular or private gifts and to weigh over with the most inward affection how much our most benignant Lord has done and borne for my sake; how much He has given me from His treasures; and that according to His own divine decree and good pleasure, He desires to give me Himself as far as He can. Which things having been very well considered, let me turn to myself and examine with myself what my duty is, what it is equitable and just that I should offer and present to the Divine Majesty. Certainly it is, without doubt, to offer all I have and myself also with the greatest affection and with words after this, or the like manner:

"Receive, O Lord, my whole liberty, accept my memory, understanding, and whole will. Whatsoever I have or possess, Thou hast given me. This all I restore to Thee and to Thy will altogether deliver up to be governed. Give me only the love of Thee with Thy grace and I am rich enough and desire nothing else.

"The second will be to contemplate God existing in each of His creatures, and to the elements indeed granting to be, but to the plants, by vegetation, also to live; to the animals, in addition, to perceive;

<sup>1</sup>This phrase is the same in substance as that in the principle or foundation, "Man was created to *praise*, reverence and serve the Lord his God." We had cause to say that there praise is the praise of love.



to men, in the last place, also to understand. Among whom I, too, have received all these benefits—to be, to live, to perceive, and to understand. And He has been pleased to make me a kind of temple of Himself, created to His own image and likeness. From admiration of all which things, returning into myself, let me do as in the first point, or better, if anything better shall occur, which same practice must be followed in order in the points which follow.

“The third is to contemplate the same God and Lord working, and, in a manner, laboring in His creatures (the heavens, elements, plants, fruits, and animals) for my sake, inasmuch as He gives and preserves to them what they are, have, can, and do. All which things must be turned back to the consideration of myself.

“The fourth, to behold how all gifts and good things come down from heaven—such as are power, justice, goodness, knowledge, and every other human perfection—circumscribed by certain determined bounds, and from that boundless treasure of all good are derived as light from the sun. I must add also the aforesaid turning back to the consideration of myself. A colloquy also will be made at the end, to be concluded with the Our Father.”

We add no note or comment to this last of the exercises of four weeks. It is limpid in its sublime simplicity and is above praise. Manifestly St. Ignatius here had before his mind the wording of the greatest and first commandment as proclaimed by Moses in Deuteronomy and by Our Lord in the gospels according to Sts. Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

Whatever difficulty there is in saying heartily his prayer “Receive, O Lord” (*Suscipe, Domine*), is found also in fulfilling that commandment. When treating of it in a special chapter we will explain at full length that the objection based by Luther and others on the phrases “with all Thy powers, etc.,” is futile. For the present we remind the reader that this is one of the commandments of Our Lord and that St. John teaches that none of His commandments is heavy.

Besides the meditations or contemplations of the four weeks, St. Ignatius gives several series of rules for reforming our life and all of our desires or affections.

The last series is at the very end of his little book and is entitled “Some rules to be observed in order that we may think (or feel) with the orthodox Church.” The last or eighteenth of these rules is as follows:

“Although to serve God much from pure love is to be esteemed above all things, yet we ought to praise much the fear of His divine majesty. Because not only filial fear is a pious and most holy thing.

but also the servile fear where a man does not attain to anything better and more profitable. Because it helps much toward emerging from mortal sin, and after a person has emerged from this he easily arrives at the filial fear which is altogether acceptable and agreeable to Our Lord God, because it is inseparately joined with the divine love."

Here St. Ignatius, in the very last words of this book (of which Pope Paul III teaches the whole world for a perpetual memorial of the thing that all and each of its contents are praiseworthy), explicitly affirms that acts of love are easy for all who through even servile fear of God in the proper sense have emerged from mortal sin. How abundantly right we have been in saying that he supposes this truth in the beginning and in the end and in every part of his little book!

## CHAPTER V

### *THIS STUDY IS NOT ONLY SWEET BUT USEFUL*

**W**HAT is the use of the present study? What practical advantage can we hope to reap from it? This topic of utility is usually treated in the exordium of an oral discourse to prepare the minds of the hearers and render them attentive, benevolent, and docile to the orator and his cause. It is in the first chapter or in the preface of a written essay or book that the writer often shows how his work meets a long felt need. Both in the beginning and in the course of this study we have already touched on this topic. But at the present stage the mind of the reader is readier to appreciate a fuller reply to the question: "What is the use of this study?" Perhaps, too, his mind is now like a weary traveler in his walk on a long road. After covering a great distance he may need to stop and rest a while and in the meantime look backward and forward and around and take a view of his bearings.

What, then, is the use of this study? If it brought no advantage but the certain knowledge of the truth that acts of love are easy, for this alone the toil would be well worth while.

Some forty odd years ago, spectrum analysis was in its infancy. Its birth was a joy to lovers of science. Just then an able French professor gave an American youth a lecture to write and deliver on this startling discovery. The professor had given thorough, lucid explanations of the principles and applications of this new method of analysis to the whole class, and had placed at the service of that youth many new volumes and pamphlets and journals, from which to draw the materials of the lecture. One of the authors in his enthusiasm went into an ecstasy over the fact that so many scientific truths had been already learned through the little crystal prism such as had been used to deck the chandeliers of the gay ballroom for the giddy dance. Another author cited the sweet little

verses which we of that generation as lisping children had all learned by heart from our first reader :

“Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
How I wonder what you are,  
Up above the world so high,  
Like a diamond in the sky.”

And this grave writer made the commentary that through spectrum analysis we could detect the nature of many of the elements burning in the sun and even in the stars by analyzing their rays of light, and observing the number and size and position of the lines in their spectra and comparing them with the lines of the spectra of incandescent metals whose nature we know. “And,” he added, “now we can say to the little star, up above the world so high, twinkling like a diamond in the sky, not I *wonder*, but I *know* what you are.”

The professor joined in the rhapsody of the grave writer, but the wisecre American youth coolly asked, “Suppose I do know that this or that metal, such as we here hold in our hands, is burning in the atmosphere of the sun or stars, what good does it do me to know that about things so far off?” The graduate of the *Ecole Polytechnique* burst into a paroxysm of laughter at such utilitarian philosophy so new to him, and so strange to such a lover of science. However, he patiently explained that through spectrum analysis several new metals had already been discovered, and that this was the most delicate of all the methods of analysis and was destined to be most useful for the practice of medicine. But he, like St. Thomas, would have been content if spectrum analysis had only given us the noble joy of knowing some new truth about the greatest of physical bodies.

The Angel of the Schools, in many of his treatises, often comes back on the praise of new knowledge as a joy special and proper to man as a rational animal. Like all other theologians, he teaches that the happiness of heaven consists in the beatific vision, in seeing God face to face as He is, with our intelligence; in the immediate knowledge and love of God and the joy included in those acts of the intellect and the will.

But there is a well-known controversy between St. Thomas and his bosom friend and admirer, St. Bonaventure, whether

the substance or essence of the happiness of heaven consists in the knowledge or in the love of God. The Seraphic Doctor holds that the essence is in the act of the will, but the Angelic Doctor maintains that it is in the act of the intellect as the principal element or ingredient of happiness, that it is in the contemplation of the splendor of the First Truth and Beauty of which every created truth or beauty is a copy.

Near the beginning of the "*Summa Theologica*," St. Thomas approvingly cites Aristotle as saying that the smallest knowledge of the greatest things is more desirable than the most certain knowledge of the smallest.

How inferior is the mineral kingdom to the vegetable, the vegetable to the animal, the animal to the spiritual!

Man is a microcosm or little universe, combining in his nature the perfections, order, and beauty of each one of the kingdoms. To the eye of God, what are all gold and diamonds, fruits and flowers, beasts that move on the earth, and birds of the air and fishes of the sea? What are all the land and water of our planet and what are the sun and moon and all the stars of heaven to one tiny babe or ragged beggar? What are all these divine footprints to one intelligent, free immortal spirit, made to the divine image and likeness, illumined with the light and beauty of the divine countenance, endowed with power to rule his inferiors and control even the lightning, and act according to right reason and control base passion? What are any or all of these inferior beings to one immortal soul, for which the Son of God not only took the form of a slave and prayed and wept, but paid His precious blood even to the last drop? And the noblest act of which a spirit is capable on earth or in heaven, that which makes it the most godlike, the most perfect imitation, image and likeness of God, is the act of love for the infinitely good God, because He is infinitely good.

In the eyes of God and in truth, in comparison with one human act of love for God above all things for His own sake, what are the shining of the sun, moon and stars and the movements of planets through the immensity of space? What, in themselves, are the rise and fall of empires and even prophecies and the raising of the dead to life? All those beings and acts are smallest things and a soul and its acts of love are

greatest. Even though our study ended only in dreams or guesses about the soul's acts of love, still, according to the wise rule of the greatest philosophers, non-Christian and Christian, such smallest knowledge about these greatest things were more desirable than most certain knowledge of those smallest. What, then, should we say about the value and nobility of most certain knowledge with regard to these greatest?

What is the use, or rather the need, of certain and undoubted knowledge about the proposition demonstrated in this book? This question in the end means, what is the use or need of *practising* love for God and what is the loss or harm in not *practising* it?

Suppose that a person positively thinks that love for God above all things for His own sake is so hard in practice as to be rare in fact save in the case of saints, who are few. Or again, make the supposition that he only has some lurking doubts whether these acts are so easy as to be common among ordinary souls. He has heard our proofs and explanations and their weight seems to him to be preponderating. But in early childhood he somehow got the impression that love is hard and rare and even in spite of himself his mind is still ever haunted by those deep and vivid early false impressions which keep coming back like nightmares or ghost-stories of long ago. What will be the necessary, or at least the natural and usual practical outcome of this state of mind?

Perhaps he will never try at all to make acts of love in his heart. Surely his trials will be only rare, and these rare trials will always be hesitating and half-hearted, and rarely if ever successful. What then will be the outcome of his thus thinking that he can not or doubting whether he can? It will be that he can not and will not.

In his heart and soul he may thus make a good agnostic or a good Lutheran or a good Calvinist or a good Quietist, but he will never make a good Christian or a good Catholic. "Principles beget desires, desires efforts, efforts actions, actions habits, and habits character." And his false principle that love is hard and rare will never beget habits of love for God for His own sake, or of love for our neighbor as ourself for God's sake, and these are the characteristics of the Catholic Christian.

The great majority of the prayers and practices of the Catholic Church will be to him a sealed book, or, at most, one in a foreign language which he has never understood.

Has this dupe of gloomy absurdities any disciples who come within the sphere of his intellectual and spiritual influence and look up to him for guidance or direction? He can not help communicating to them his own false impressions. What will be his instructions or persuasions to them? What, at least, will be his hints? You are not saints, will not be beatified or canonized, will never be worthy to have your names enrolled by Rome in her catalogue of the blessed or saints. You have not heroic virtue, all the four cardinal moral virtues and all the three theological virtues, or at least you do not possess them in an extraordinary or heroic degree. You are not a superhuman being, a superman. You are not endowed with extraordinary gifts of enlightenment and piety. In short, you are not a saint. Then leave love for God to those who have extraordinary supernatural gifts and powers and you stick to motives of shame for sin and fear of God's punishments and hope for His rewards. In these you may expect to succeed and make good use of your precious strength and time, which would else be exhausted and wasted without any profit of fruits of good works, if devoted to useless efforts to making acts of pure love for God."

We do not stop to repeat and explain over again that this rigamarole is based on misstatement and bad logic. As we have seen over and over again, if our love for God is not deep and strong enough to determine our will to love God so intensely as to be resolved even to avoid imperfections, to avoid choosing what is a good way but a less perfect of two ways of acting, still it may determine us to avoid venial sin. And if it is not strong enough to determine us to avoid venial sin, still it may be sufficient to determine us to avoid mortal sin and to avoid it simply because God is too good for us to offend Him grievously. And the very essential concept of love for God is that of friendship, and I may still in my heart be a true friend to my Friend, though I am unwilling to avoid venial offenses which do not violate, break, sunder friendship.

Neither do we stop to explain that if I can not love God every moment as in heaven, or most frequently as the saints

do on earth, yet I may be able to elicit the act of love twice or once a day, or once a week, or once a month, or once a year. And finally we need not here repeat that love for God, known as all good by my natural reason and by my supernatural faith and loved as all good by my will, may not always, or even often, flow over in sensible emotions and yet may exist in its essence or substance in the intelligence and will without these unessential accidental feelings. These explanations are all ignored in the foregoing Jansenistic, Puritanic homily, and on confounding these distinct and different things, on this confusion as a basis, is built up the false conclusion that any acts of genuine love for God above all things for His own sake are hard and rare, save in the case of saints, who are few. And any who bear these explanations in mind will clearly see the truth that acts of love are so easy as to be common among all who are resolved to avoid mortal sin. We say, we do not here insist on these oft-repeated fundamental rudiments. Our present point is only this, that such a teacher and such a disciple with such false convictions or unfounded doubts will not love God or will do so rarely.

But let us insist on the other side of the question, which is not only brighter and sweeter to dwell on, but the only one which is true and based on clear and distinct conceptions of truth, of things as they are in reality and are known without any danger or fear of error. Let us, then, suppose the case of a person who has, by the force of evident truth, torn out of his mind the last remnant of doubt and hesitation and is certain and secure on this matter, and has reached this point of perfect rest of his intelligence by means of this study. What to him will be the use of this study? The natural effects of this cause will be the contradictory of the enumerated opposite effects of the opposite cause. Those who think they can not love God or doubt whether they can, in fact can not and will not. Those who know they can love God and have no doubt of their power, in fact can and will.

There is a famous line in the fifth *Æneid*, where Virgil describes the boat race, the rowers who are ahead, their greater courage and its cause: "*Hos successus alit, possunt,*



*quia posse videntur*”—“These success feeds, they can because they think they can.”

In war and in athletics there is only general truth in the maxims, “fortune favors the brave,” “those can who think they can.”

Their success often depends on many circumstances extrinsic to the warrior and athlete, and over these circumstances they have not always full control. The defeats of Hannibal at Zama and Napoleon at Waterloo are not accepted by the school-boy debater or expert war critic as conclusive proof of the superior genius or courage of Scipio or Wellington.

Not absolutely always is the race to the swift or the battle to the strong.

In the present matter “those can who think they can,” is true not only generally but universally, and with a universality that is absolute. The success of the effort to love God depends on no circumstances outside of God and us. And as we have seen and will see more fully in a special chapter, God is always at hand with His graces to aid us to love Him above all things for His own sake.

To love God, in the divine view and plan, is not an extraordinary but a most ordinary act. What is the chief thing to be performed for which He created each one of us of the human race to His own image and likeness? It is to love God. What is the greatest and first divine commandment to each one of the human race from Adam to the last soul on earth up to the day of judgment? It is to love God. What, in the divine plan, is the one thing exacted as the only means of salvation for the vast majority of the adults of the human race? It is an act of love for God. What is the chief act of the soul, either explicitly expressed or at least supposed, in the Our Father given by Our Lord as the form of prayer for all, in the psalms given by the Holy Spirit as forms of prayer for Jew and Christian, and in the large majority of the prayers approved by the Church for all the clergy and people? It is the act of love for God as a Friend. In the divine plan the act of love is not extraordinary, but ordinary, and in the same divine plan God’s graces to love Him are not extraordinary but the most ordinary, common, and usual.

“God, who gives abundantly to all, does not refuse grace to him who does his part.” This is St. Thomas’s maxim. And this is a mild way of saying that God gives special and even extraordinary graces to all who do what is in their power, who seriously try. If any one has tried to love God and has failed, he can not say that it was because God does not help those who help themselves. It was only because he did not himself seriously try and help himself.

Therefore, the use of this certain knowledge gained from this study will be that it will induce a serious and vigorous trial and certain success and many genuine acts of love for God above all things for His own sake.

And no one doubts about the utility of these acts, or will doubtfully ask what is their use. For in the first place, many have needed them as the necessary means of saving their souls. Did they think that this only plank provided for them by God to save them from the shipwreck of sin and damnation was too slippery for them to grasp and hold? Then their hands *were* too weak to seize and hold it, and were *made* weak by their faintheartedness, and their hearts were *made* faint by the foolish error that acts of love were practically impossible for themselves. How many souls have been lost owing to this foolish error, and how many will be saved and enjoy the happiness of heaven for all eternity owing to this study and its fruit of certain knowledge that acts of love are easy, and owing to the courage of heart given by it to the mind and will to seize and hold that blessed plank thrown out to us all by the Father of our Brother who died that each one of us might be saved. This plain point is hard for any mind to miss, and he who has caught it will see that the truth of the proposition, “this is a useful study,” is as clear as the noon-day sun. To put the matter of these pages together has cost the writer much labor; but how this labor has been loved from the hope of thus opening heaven for many souls who else might live and die in sin and fall into hell for all eternity!

A worldly reader may object, “Would not your time and mine have been better spent in studying something less supermundane and ethereal, some means of lessening poverty and misery and promoting progress and the social betterment of the masses of humanity?”

Dear worldly reader, if you have made this objection seriously, you have based it on false suppositions. You have supposed that this is the only world and life, that when we are dead we are done for, like the pig, and that saving your soul, your own soul, your immortal soul, and saving it for eternity and once and only once, at death, is not a practical matter. For the loss of your soul is not like loss of fortune, friends, or health, which may be regained. You suppose in your objection that there is no heaven, no hell, no purgatory, no judgment, and you seem even to suppose that there is no death. You certainly suppose that there is no Father who created you to His own image and likeness that you might know Him and love Him and serve Him in this world and be forever happy with Him in the next; that there is no Son who became man and died on the cross that you might be saved; that there is no Holy Ghost who pours His graces and especially the grace of the charity of God into individual hearts. You even suppose that you are a brute and that there is no such thing as a soul in yourself or your brother men.

Each one of these suppositions is manifestly false, and none of them can be admitted as true and a basis of a true conclusion. Indeed, the salvation of your soul is the one thing important, essential, necessary, and practical for you and all humanity.

But for the moment, for the sake of argument, we may waive all these fundamental truths and come down to your level and meet you on your own ground. There is nothing that can do more for the human race to make it happy in this life than the practice of love for God and of love for our neighbor as ourself. Why so? Because there is no greater source of prosperity and happiness to the individual, family, state, or whole family of nations, than the practice of morality, the keeping of the ten commandments; as there is no greater source of poverty, misery, unhappiness, and premature decay and death than the disregard for the ten commandments and their moral principles.

Let the human race—nations, families, individuals—apostatize from God and His worship and become blasphemers and dishonourers of parents, pastors, magistrates, and masters; and murderers, and adulterers, and thieves, and liars; and

slaves of lust for pleasure, power, and pelf. Then they are degenerates and wretched. On the other hand, let them all faithfully observe these laws engraven by the finger of the wise, holy, just, kind Creator on the marble tablets given to Moses upon Sinai and by the same finger on the heart of every human being made to the image and likeness of the Creator. Then they are not degenerates and wretches, but noble and happy. Each precept of the decalogue is a participation of the divine Reason and Will commanding rational social animals to observe the order natural for them and forbidding them to violate it. Each of these precepts is natural law and it is a true maxim with regard to the natural law, "in what you sin, in that you are punished."

It is Utopian to expect that at all times the sun and moon and stars will be unclouded and the sky blue and the zephyrs blowing and the roses blooming, or that all men will always keep the ten commandments. But in the proportion in which they do keep these commandments, in the same proportion will they live long and prosper and be happy.

Now, it may be maintained that each one of the precepts of the decalogue expresses a duty of *justice*, of giving to God, to our parents, pastors, magistrates, and masters, and to our neighbor in general, their strict right. It is manifest injustice to our neighbor to commit murder, theft, adultery, or calumny. It is social injustice to disobey or dishonor lawful authorities. It is irreligious injustice to God to take His holy name in vain or to refuse to adore Him and recognize His supreme excellence and our utter dependence upon Him.

As justice is a virtue inclining us to give every one his strict right or due, charity is a virtue inclining us to treat God, or our neighbor, as a Friend, as a second self, to regard His good as our good, His happiness as our happiness, to look on Him as not only worthy of receiving His strict right or due but also as worthy of our love, our benevolence, as worthy of receiving and sharing whatever good things we have. Justice gives to each what is *his* own, charity gives also what is *our* own. Now, any one who *loves* God and his neighbor will look on it as a small matter to adore God and to shun blasphemy, dishonor to authority, murder, adultery, theft, calumny, covetousness. How easy to him to observe each

one of the commandments. Therefore, this study makes it easy to love God and our neighbor, and this love makes it easy to observe the commandments, and the observance of the commandments promotes social progress and betterment, and lessens poverty and misery, and our worldly reader grants that this is practical. Hence this study is a useful means for this end, granted by our worldly minded reader to be practical.

This reply is that of Leo XIII. In the year 1892 he wrote his famous Encyclical, "*Rerum Novarum*," for which he received letters of warm thanks from the President of France and the Emperor of Germany. Like a prophet, there he denounces those capitalists who do not give their employees a living wage, one sufficient for frugal and decent support, as guilty of downright injustice crying out from the earth to Heaven for vengeance, and he boldly depicts the present miserable condition of masses of toilers as little better than slavery under the tyranny of capital and cries out to the whole world that a remedy must be found and found quickly. In the body of the Encyclical he lucidly defines many of the rights and duties of capital and labor, and proposes practical remedies. And at the very end, like an apostle, he eloquently sums up his teachings and tells us that the sovereign remedy for the abuses of labor and capital is to be found in mutual justice, but especially in mutual charity.

Incidentally, we note that the Holy Father there manifestly supposes that charity in the proper sense can be easily practised by the few who make and administer the laws, and by the great number of capitalists throughout the world, and by the still greater number of the millions of toilers for wages. In other words, the eloquent closing words of this epoch-making utterance of the Vicar of Christ are an unanswerable proof of the truth of our general proposition that acts of love for God because He is good and of love for our neighbor as ourself for God's sake, are not so hard as to be rare, but are so easy as to be most common among ordinary souls, and that many besides the few saints can be moved by this highest motive to overcome selfish greed of gain.

To those who are not carnal-minded, the many special utilities which will accrue to their souls from the certainty that

love is easy, are so manifest that they scarcely need to be named. How much more confidence, and consequently how much more devotion in approaching the altar or the holy table, when we can so much more easily feel assurance that we are in the state of grace! This doctrine should remove from all minds the last objections to frequent communion, which is doing so much to renew all things in Christ among the faithful of every age and condition of life. We know that the Holy Father is wise in expressing his wish that all who are free from mortal sin and have a right intention should receive daily. This doctrine shows with abundance of light *why* and *how* he is wise in this invitation of the many to the great supper or love-feast prepared by the great and loving King. If it is easy for all to make acts of love for God above all things for His own sake, how easy it is likewise to be in the state of grace and have the best of intentions; and, therefore, how easy for all to make good communions.

If it is easy for all to make acts of perfect contrition, how very easy to have a hearty sorrow and detestation for our sins and the firm purpose not to sin anew and to fulfil by confession all the regulations made by the Sacred Heart of Jesus and proposed to us by tender Mother Church with regard to the tribunal of mercy; and how easy to shake off the yoke of the tyrannical regulations imposed by Jansenists, who make the Lamb of God a tyrant and the Church a stepmother and the sacrament of Penance a butchery of souls. And if it is easy to love God *before* receiving these or other sacraments, how far easier *after*, when our souls in them have tasted the Lord and His sweetness and have "quaffed waters in joy from the fountain of the Saviour."

Liberalism is an "ism," an abuse, an excess, an unbridled license that begets practical licentiousness. It is Protestantism run wild and mad. It protests against the authority of priest, bishop, or Pope to teach, guide, or feed the soul. It protests against precepts of the Church old or new. It protests against the teaching authority of Council, or Pope, or of Roman Congregation delegated by the Pope. It protests against the Apostolic Traditions pertaining to faith. It protests against all revelation, even that written in the Gospels. It protests against God whether as a Teacher or a Lawgiver. It protests

even against reason as a restraint on the selfish whim of individualistic pride or sensuality. And all these protesting, rebellious, pernicious crimes are perpetrated in the holy name of liberty!

However, let men love God as our Father and they will immediately *love* parents, pastors, and magistrates; and correspondingly banish from their hearts liberalistic *hate* for authority coming from God, and they will *love* every law of the Church or the State as ordained by revered Majesty, and they will *love* every teaching of faith on account of love for the all-good Teacher.

Devotion is readiness to do religious things, to perform acts which recognize the divine excellence and Majesty and our dependence and subjection. And the soul that loves is not only willing and prompt but joyous in rendering to God the things that are God's. The large body of the prayers placed before us by Our Lord, the Holy Spirit, the Church, formally express love for God or openly suppose it. How hard for us to persevere in the devout recitation of these prayers without love, and how easy with it!

The Jansenists taught, as we have seen, that every act not motivated by love for God is not only unmeritorious, unworthy of any reward from God, but also positively bad. The Lutherans and Calvinists had said that there is no merit in any human act whatsoever, and they agreed with the Jansenists that every act is bad that is motivated by fear of punishments or hope of rewards, or a sense of the shamefulness of sins or of the nobility of virtues; in fine, by anything without love. The Catholic doctrine is that good acts may be both morally good and meritorious though not motivated by love. The Lutherans, Calvinists, and Jansenists taught that love is hard; and we teach that it is easy. Moreover, as we have seen, the more we love God the more we hope for His rewards and the more we love each virtue and hate each vice.

Not only faith and hope, but prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance are at their best only when motivated by love for God.

Love Christ dying for you on the cross parched with thirst—how easy to be temperate! What joyous courage in the martyrs from love for Our Lord and for souls! Spartan and

Roman courage were inferior to that of the Christians. The former in death glared fury and hate, and the latter beamed love at those who sought their life. The latter met death not only with unconquered spirit, but conquering the hearts of their slayers, and the blood of martyrs was the seed of Christians.

As we have seen, how easy all duties of justice become when we have charity!

And as for prudence or right reason about what to do or desire for the service and glory of God and the salvation of my soul and that of others—what a rush of light to the head from a heart inflamed with love for God and for our neighbor as ourself! How blind in practical life is he who does not see and love the good in God and man!

He who loves does not come under the censure of St. Paul, "All seek the things that are their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's." (Philip. ii. 21.) For they not only approve, applaud, and desire the things that are Jesus Christ's, but seek them with avidity. They have true zeal. Sins against Our Lord, harm or loss of souls, or suffering in those whom He loves and for whom He died, are a deep sadness to a heart that loves Him. All that promotes the splendor of His worship, the sanctification and salvation of souls, the alleviation of human miseries, all palms flourishing in our own good works or in those of others are a delight to a heart that loves Jesus Christ. It is love for Our Lord that gives the most active and untiring zeal.

Toward the end of his life, Luther saw his own people unwilling to give of their substance to support the clergy or erect or sustain churches or hospitals or schools. He recalled that men had believed in the merit of their good works as worthy to be rewarded by God and had been taught that hope for God's rewards is not bad but good, and that then money for religion and charity had rained down in floods from the sky, according to his own phrase. And now, he said, since they do not believe this any more, they are unwilling to give for holy purposes. Indeed, this hope bore the fruit of love. The ages of faith were ages of hope and love, and there is the secret of the many great cathedrals built with the aid of little machinery and yet so massive and rich and beautiful that we



scarcely aspire to copy them. The moderns are amazed at the exquisite finish of each least detail and the long painstaking labor it cost the highly trained hand and eye and mind. This perfection could have been the product only of generosity of love like that of Abel and David and Magdalen.

Toward the end of his life, Luther often lamented that he had preached his doctrine that love is impossible, and hope for rewards wicked, and that faith alone, without good works, is that which justifies and saves. He was so dismayed with the immorality which had followed his preaching that he often thought the day of judgment was at hand. We have heard St. Alphonsus giving it as his opinion that he who does not make an act of love for God above all things once a month will yield to some grievous temptation and fall into some mortal sin. Whether the holy Doctor is right or wrong in this precise position, it is certain that love for God is the strongest of all forces in our heart against temptation. Spiritual writers often compare mortification and self-denial to sharp tools cutting out the roots of vices and concupiscence, which are like weeds and briars in the field of the soul, but they say that love for God annihilates these noxious roots like a blazing flame, that more charity makes less cupidity. Let us love Our Lord above all things for His own sake and our neighbor as ourself for Our Lord's sake, and the concupiscence of the flesh and the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life will be immediately checked so as not to predominate; and if love for God continues long it will soon be realized that to fight the fire of concupiscence with the fire of charity is the most effectual tactics to overcome worldly impulses. St. Paul refers to the power of this fire in the following words of Rom. viii. 35 sq.:

“Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? Or distress? Or famine? Or nakedness? Or danger? Or persecution? Or the sword? (As it is written: *For Thy sake we are put to death all the day long. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*) But in all these things we overcome, because of Him that hath loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Above we have touched on the facility for prayer and devotion in one who has love for God. A learned and zealous prelate once avowed that as a child he had been imbued with the error that love for God is hard and rare and that with this error before his mind he had been unable to join heartily with the multitudes of the faithful of his flock in their simple, earnest, and frequent efforts to gain the indulgences offered by the Church. He was laboring under a mistake when he supposed that to gain indulgences love and perfect contrition are necessary, and imperfect contrition or attrition is not sufficient. Indulgences remit, outside of the sacraments, the temporal punishments due to sins after their guilt has been remitted. If we have a hearty sorrow and detestation for all of our sins, mortal and venial, and a firm purpose not to commit even any venial sin in the future, and this our penance is based only on attrition or the imperfect motives, there is no reason for believing that all our temporal punishments may not then be remitted. Our Lord has told the Church, "Whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven," and she can loose and remit even the guilt of sins, and why not the punishment due to them, which is less than the guilt? He has given to the Church the keys of the kingdom of heaven and she can open heaven to our souls and thus can take away not only guilt but punishments that shut heaven to us. And he who has the attrition thus described opposes no obstacle to the Church's effective use of the power of the keys and of loosing. He is properly disposed to receive from the Church as administrator of her treasury of the satisfactory merits of Christ and the saints, the payment which she makes by the use of her administrative authority.

He who peruses the brief but complete treatise on indulgences in the "*Summa Theologica*" will scarcely escape the impression that St. Thomas seemed to know nothing about the many difficulties created by some minor post-reformation Catholic writers in gaining plenary indulgences even plenaryly.

Many of us may argue, these difficulties were not visible to the penetrating mind of the Angel of the Schools; and would he not have seen them if they really exist? All the data which we have were under his eyes.

Theological difficulties have been based on alleged revela-

tions. Thus, St. Philip Neri is reported to have said that one old woman and himself were the only ones in Rome who gained the plenary indulgence plenary in the year of jubilee. With Father Gallerani, S.J., late Editor-in-Chief of the "*Civiltà*," we find it passing strange for the singularly humble Philip to publish this, even though he knew it to be true from divine revelation. It seems most likely that he would have left it unsaid.

At that time there were in Rome the saintly Dominican Ghislieri (Pius V); St. Jerome Æmiliani; St. Camillus de Lellis; St. Cajetan, founder of the Theatines; and St. Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus. Philip was not only an intimate friend of each one of these saints, but loved to praise their sanctity. Thus, according to the Bollandists, Philip, on reading the first life of Ignatius published after the latter's death, exclaimed that it did not tell one-half of the sanctity which he had seen with his eyes in Ignatius. This tale, then, would represent Philip as proclaiming, "Pius, Jerome, Camillus, Cajetan, and Ignatius were not one of them as holy as I. I gained the whole jubilee and none of them was holy enough to do so."

The Bollandists gather all the revelations made to Philip. They have not a word about this one. The late scholarly Cardinal Capecepatro, Archbishop of Capua, was of the Oratory of St. Philip, and wrote the most detailed and accurate life of the sweet founder of his great Congregation. In it not a word about this alleged revelation. Gallerani holds that it was invented by some old woman to frighten the children on the hearth under the mantelpiece before bedtime, and that it has no more truth or use than their other ghost stories.

To those who found theological arguments on such alleged private revelations, Kern, on page 108 of his already cited work on Extreme Unction, alleges the counter revelation made to St. Mechtilde of Magdeburg that the number of Christian souls that fly immediately from earth into heaven is greater than the number of those that perish. This revelation was reported before the Reformation and before the *excessive* antagonism of *some* Catholic writers to some Protestant teachings.

When the Protestants denied the existence of purgatory,

Catholics often taught not only that some but nearly all pass through purgatory on the way to heaven. They then often went on and denied that Extreme Unction was instituted by Our Lord to prepare the soul for immediate entry into heaven. However, the greatest of the post-Reformation Catholic theologians are proved by Kern to be morally unanimous in their agreement with the true doctrine on Extreme Unction, previously emphasized by St. Thomas and the other great doctors of his great theological age of the great thirteenth century.

The writer has perused the treatises on indulgences by Bellarmine, Suarez, and Lugo, and these *greatest* post-Reformation doctors leave the same impression as St. Thomas on the reader's mind regarding the facility of gaining plenary indulgences plenarily. As has been said, there is no reason for holding that to have all the temporal punishments due to our sins remitted in an indulgence, we must have sorrow, detestation and purpose motivated by love. On the other hand there is nothing so opposed to sins as acts of love. Nothing honors God more and more repairs for the honor taken away from Him by sins.

If we have perfect contrition for all of our mortal and venial sins, their guilt will be remitted before the actual reception of a sacrament. Will the temporal punishments due to them be also remitted? They may be if our degree of love is intense, if we not only love but love *much*, like Magdalen, and like her have much forgiven. If our degree of love is not intense, they may not be.

However, he who believes that love is easy, will easily practice not only ordinary but also intense love. And if this is so easy, how much easier it is to have attrition for all of our venial sins and to thus realize the conditions necessary for the action of the cause of the remission of our temporal punishments. This *cause* is not our fulfilment of the light *conditions*, but the satisfactory merits in the sufferings of Our Lord and the saints and in these merits as applied to us by the Church.

We can not follow those theologians who say that it is rare for the faithful to be free from attachments to venial sin or those who say that those who commit venial sins are

attached to these sins. Yes, they *are* attached at the moment when they commit them, but they may have easily been detached at the previous moment of confession or communion, etc. Relapse into mortal sin is no proof that we were not detached from all mortal sin at the moment of absolution. It is proof only that we are weak and changeful and may be bad now, although we were truly good a short time before. And this remark has greater force with regard to relapse into venial sins, which are occasioned oftener by weakness and more rarely by deliberate malice. To gain a plenary indulgence plenary we must indeed be free from attachment to venial sin; that is, we must have a firm resolve or disposition to seriously try with God's grace to avoid it. This does not mean that we must be free from indeliberate tendencies, impulses, inclinations to do evil things.

We are Catholics and not Calvinists, Lutherans, Jansenists, Puritans, and we know that concupiscence or indeliberate inclination to evil is never sin in the proper sense and that the Church hurls her anathema at any one who thinks that it is truly sin.

We are fully aware that many grave theologians teach that detachment from all venial sin is very rare. However, we have not seen any reason given by them to support their assertion. What is gratuitously asserted by them may be gratuitously denied by us. Here is a question to be settled more by experience and observation of souls than by theological reasoning. We have had opportunities of observing a great number and variety of souls. We have known a great number and variety who, after confession or communion or meditation or at other moments of fervor, were resolved to try to avoid all venial sin in general from the universal motives of shame for sins or fear of God's punishments or hope for His rewards or love for God on account of His goodness. We have known not a few who with the counsel of their confessors took a vow and kept it never to commit a fully deliberate venial sin. The latter class are extraordinary and heroic. The former class are, we think, rather ordinary among daily communicants and seem to us to lack nothing required for gaining a plenary indulgence plenary. Many of these same adverse theologians were misled on the requisites for daily and early

communion and also on the efficacy of Extreme Unction. May they not have been misled likewise on the rareness of detachment from all venial sin and on the consequent rareness of gaining plenary indulgences plenaryly?

The conviction that it is hard and rare to gain plenary indulgences plenaryly has *made* it hard and rare for many, and the conviction that it is easy and common will *make* it easy and common in practice for many. Thus, there is nothing risked or lost and there is much surely gained by embracing our side of this question. Difficulties and objections may be raised against the truth of our contention and fears may be excited about practical consequences. But these difficulties, objections, and fears are most similar to those regarding the easiness of the act of love or of worthy daily and early communion, and the answers are likewise similar and the reader can see them by himself without further aid from us.

The aim of this chapter has been to show that this study is useful. We submit that we have shown that it begets certainty that acts of love are easy and common, and that this certainty begets many acts of love and that acts of love are most useful for our temporal and eternal nobility and welfare. Therefore, this doctrine is the discovery of rich mines of the gold of love latent in the recesses of human hearts supernaturalized by divine graces. And it is also the discovery of an easy method of digging out this gold of love in abundance.

Ponce de Leon and others wasted their lives in the search for fountains gushing with the elixir of life. This doctrine leads surely to the "waters leaping up into life eternal."

How many days and nights the alchemists gave to the search for the philosopher's stone, that would turn baser metals into gold. Physics and chemistry and mechanics have made in our day one most startling discovery after another. But will they ever find the secret sought with such toil by alchemy? In the spiritual order our study leads to turning acts of lesser virtues into acts of love. We do not mean that charity changes the nature of acts of faith, hope, prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, but it covers over their less noble silver with its noble gilding after increasing their own native silver mass by its touch.

At the wedding of Cana in Galilee the power of Our Lord

at the prayer of Mary changed water into wine. The Virgin Mother of God is our Mother, too, and she prays for us to her Son even when we do not ask her prayers. And many of those who make this study will, through the power of Our Lord, see even the waters of their acts of temperate eating and drinking changed into acts of express love for God into that spiritual wine that gladdens the heart of man who tastes it and the eye of God and the angels and blessed who behold it in the human heart.

Love for God and our neighbor are often called by the Fathers the two wings of the commandments. Their strength makes the yoke and burden of all the commandments sweet and light. Other virtues crawl or walk. "When Thou hast dilated my heart I have run in the way of Thy commandments." "Love runs, flies, rejoices." This study makes it easy and common to have our hearts thus dilated and to have our souls plumed with these two wings.

## CHAPTER VI

### *ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE ERROR THAT ACTS OF LOVE AND PERFECT CONTRITION ARE HARD AND RARE*

**T**HIS error was directly caused in the minds of some Catholics by a fondness for some of the principles of Calvinism, Lutheranism, Jansenism, Semi-Jansenism, Quietism, Semi-Quietism, Agnosticism, or Pantheism. In the minds of some other Catholics it was occasioned or indirectly caused by excessive antagonism to some of those teachings of enemies of the Church or to the teachings of Catholic Contritionists.

The writer made his first communion just fifty years ago. His pastor was a model of zeal, tact, and thrift, and almost every other apostolic virtue. He was a second father in every family of his small parish and was devoted to the boys and particularly devoted to our catechetical education. He traveled to Old Mexico to beg funds to build his church and on the way back the stage in which he rode was halted by a band of brigands. But to their demand to stand and deliver, he responded by ordering a charge which he led in person, and put the thieves to flight and returned home safe with his collection of three thousand gold dollars in his silken belt. Some years afterward he erected a little brick school, which was the first free school in the town and was attended by every single Catholic child of school age in the parish. We said he was a second father, but he was more like an elder brother to each boy. He was a frequent companion, not only in our studies and prayers and songs and athletic sports and family repasts, but also in our games of cards, and he could call the figures in our child contra-dances in our homes or in the May party which he gave us. But woe to the lad who missed his daily catechism lesson or who was absent from the roll-call at the Sunday-school before Vespers. For the buggy of the pastor was early the next morning seen before the door of that lad's home, and his parents were asked to render an account for the delinquency. During months before the date fixed for our



first communion and confirmation, for a full hour every day he personally instructed and drilled us in catechism, our parents and teachers having, as his precursors, already prepared his way during the five or six preceding years. Some weeks before this great event, the writer and his brother had prevailed on their father to promise to take them on a trip to see a grand sham battle between the soldiers in General Bragg's army, which was then preparing for a great blow, bloody Chickamauga. But the pastor heard of the proposed expedition and summarily halted it by his veto, which was higher law to father and mother and children. And all were obliged to interiorly acquiesce with his reasons; viz., some of the soldiers might be bad company for those boys, anyhow not one catechism class could be sacrificed to warlike sight-seeing, which would unduly disturb and distract peaceful young minds preparing for their first communion. And the rest of the preparation was of a piece with this. And yet this pastor, who himself had been taught and prepared for the priesthood by a distinguished, learned, and saintly Jesuit and who afterward became a distinguished and successful pioneer bishop, taught the writer and his whole class that we should not hope ever to make an act of contrition which remits sin without confession or absolution!

It is no wonder that Anthony Dominic Pellicier, first bishop of San Antonio, wielded such influence in every Catholic family in Montgomery, since called the "Cradle of the Confederacy." For was he not always promptly on hand in the moment of distress of the widow and the orphan and the poor and of all the sick, and was he not recognized as an adornment of every social gathering of whatsoever grade? Had he not been the instrument of God in bringing many of his flock into the true fold and of thoroughly training them in the practice of the Faith, and of constantly and wisely and firmly correcting their failings? Had he not stood by the bedside of the writer's father, who had yellow fever of the pernicious type of the year 1853, and at the moment of the usual crisis of collapse from weakness of the pulse and heart, when the temperature had subsided, pushed nurses and other numerous friends aside and administered a small glass of champagne, which saved the sick man's life? He had had

other teachers in theology before Francis de Sales Gautrelet, S.J., Brother of Francis Xavier Gautrelet, S.J., twice provincial of Lyons, and for a long time editor of the "*Etudes*" and founder of the Apostleship of Prayer, which organization, with its successor, the League of the Sacred Heart, has done so much to diffuse the practice of love for Our Lord among the millions. And it is inconceivable that Father Francis de Sales, who had been a favorite pupil of Gury at Vals, before the latter's departure from France to fill the chair of Moral Theology in the Roman College, could have instilled into the mind of young Anthony Dominic the above-mentioned Jansenistic maxim. However, there is this fact, that even such a pastor of those times, in spite of such a former teacher, taught us this error.

The writer has personal knowledge of another typical fact which bears on this phase of our subject. He learned it from the lips of a priest who was much older than himself, and who in his young days had studied with marked success in one of the greatest and most renowned seminaries of the Old World. Not long before the time of our friend, there was in that seminary an aged professor who one day made this pronouncement: "If I knew that a student in this house had in his possession a copy of Alphonsus Liguori's Moral Theology, I would have him expelled. And if I knew that one had a copy of Gury's Moral Theology, I would resign my chair." This hate for St. Alphonsus and his disciple was caused by nothing else than a strong tincture of Jansenism or Semi-Jansenism and its rigorisms, in the mind of that teacher of many Catholic priests.

For several years the writer has made it a point to ask persons of various places and classes what is their belief on the question whether acts of love are easy and common, and he has found a number of the senior priests who have not recently reviewed their text-books of theology to be of the belief that those acts are hard and rare, and he has found the same belief among many of the older Religious. Those and a number of the laity, old and young, have told us that they were thus taught by their parents or others who prepared them for first communion.

Most of those when asked their reasons for such a belief,

have replied that if the act of love or perfect contrition were so easy as we hold, then there would not have been any need for Our Lord to institute Baptism or Penance, with which sacraments attrition, which is easy, is a sufficient disposition for the remission of sins. And they added that once the people believe that acts of love and perfect contrition are easy, they will not receive Baptism or frequent the confessional.

However, these good souls were truly open minded and quickly recognized the validity of the following direct answer to their objection :

As a fact the members of the League of the Sacred Heart surely believe that they can practise devotion to the Sacred Heart and thus love Our Lord. And yet, they are conspicuous for assiduity not only at the communion-rail, but also at the confessional. And what we say about these sodalists is true of all the others, both as to the fact of frequent confession and as to their belief that they make true acts of love in their special devotions.

And, we may add, the confessions of those and other sodalists and of frequent communicants in general, are, as a class, not only more assiduous, but also more fervent, than the confessions of those who come to the holy tribunal only once every few months, or once every year in the Easter time, or once every three years at the time of the parish mission, or once in every ten years, or once in a lifetime.

As is natural and to be expected, greater practice makes acts more perfect, and as a general rule those make a more perfect examination of conscience and act of contrition and purpose of amendment and confession and satisfaction, who practise those exercises more frequently, than do others who practise them more rarely. And he who truly loves God above all things for His own sake possesses these dispositions for the sacrament of Penance the most perfectly of all classes of penitents, and he is also the best informed about the obligations of receiving this sacrament.

These all know that when we approach the holy table, if we have been guilty of a mortal sin committed after Baptism, it is not enough for us to make an act of perfect contrition and be in the state of grace, but that besides we are bound by the precept to previously confess this sin and receive abso-

lution for it, and that this is the meaning of the words of St. Paul: "Let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that chalice." (1 Cor. xi. 29.) "Now ecclesiastical usage declares that necessary *proof* to be, that no one conscious to himself of mortal sin, how contrite soever he may seem to himself, ought to approach to the sacred Eucharist without previous sacramental confession. This the holy Synod hath decreed is to be invariably observed by all Christians." (Council of Trent, session 13, chapter 7.)

Here, as we see, there is an obligation, apparently from a divine command, to confess before communion, for those who have committed mortal sin. And there is a command for all who have committed mortal sin to confess it sooner or later, and he who would not have a purpose, at least implicit, to fulfil this serious command and obligation, would not have perfect contrition or love for God above all things or even attrition. "Although it sometimes happens that this contrition is perfected by charity and reconciles man to God before this sacrament (of Penance) is actually received, nevertheless, this reconciliation is not to be ascribed to contrition itself without the *desire* of the sacrament (of Penance) which desire is included in contrition." (Council of Trent, session 14, chapter 4.) Indeed, every Catholic knows that there is this command and that we have this obligation. Others may not have this knowledge and yet may have the purpose to fulfil all the divine commands when they will know them, and thus they have the implicit purpose of fulfilling this one too.

Some, who do not consider the whole case and judge hastily, might insist that although Catholics, from believing that acts of perfect contrition and love are easy for themselves, will not take occasion to neglect the sacrament of Penance; yet non-Catholics, from such a persuasion, would easily excuse themselves from being baptized and entering the one true Church.

In answer, we beg the reader to consider the whole case. Here is a non-Catholic who formerly believed that acts of perfect contrition and of love for God above all things for His own sake are so hard as to be rare, save in the case of

the saints, to whose class he knows he does not belong. And formerly he did not try to make these acts and as a fact did not make them validly. But now he is better informed, and as a result he makes these acts validly and often says to God that he now loves Him above all things, because He is all good in Himself and deserving of the highest esteem and love, and that now he is not only glad to believe every truth which He who can neither deceive nor be deceived has revealed, and to fulfil every law which divine wisdom and goodness have made to guide us on to know God and love Him and serve Him in this life and to be forever happy with Him in the next, but that now he is also *most glad* to hear and learn what these truths and laws are, and to take them, when known, on his mind and will as a yoke that is sweet and a burden that is light and a command that is not heavy since they are lovable in themselves and also in God, their beloved Author and loving Giver. Before, he had not such love and perhaps was even jealous of his own independence, and shrank, like the philosophers described by St. Paul, from the knowledge of the duty of giving thanks and glory to God and even from the knowledge of the duty of keeping the moral law and all its precepts engraven by the Author of rational human nature on each human mind and heart. And perhaps, from this same selfish and conceited fondness for his own independence and sweet self-will, he shrank also from the knowledge of the truth of the Catholic and even the Christian religion. He perhaps said that he disliked the teaching that divorce from the marriage tie is null before God, or the teaching that hell is eternal, or the teaching that we must have faith in all that God has revealed, or the teaching that we must be baptized and must promise to obey the Church and the Pope in matters spiritual, and above all the teaching that we must confess even our secret sins of thought and desire to a priest, who is a fellow-man. Perhaps then he said that he disliked these things and thence disliked to believe that he was obliged in conscience to do them. But now that he loves God above all things because He is our God and infinitely good and worthy of our highest love for His own sake, he will not cherish any of these dislikes or any other such inordinate fondness for himself or for his own imaginary independence and

false excellence. The following will not be a picture of his soul:

“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, who didst rise in the morning! how art thou fallen to the earth, that didst wound the nations! And thou saidst in thy heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars, I will sit in the mountain of the covenant, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the most High.” (Is. xiv. 12 sq.) “Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this; and, ye gates thereof, be very desolate, saith the Lord. For My people have done two evils. They have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living water, and have digged to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. . . . Of old time thou hast broken My yoke, thou hast burst My bands, and thou saidst: I will not serve. . . . They have turned their back to Me and not their face.” (Jer. ii. 12, 13, 20, 27.)

He who loves God has none of this Satanic spirit of pride and rebellion and apostasy, which not merely turns away from God in order to turn to creatures, but even turns to creatures *in order* to turn away from God. On the contrary, according to our understanding and statement of the case, there is now true charity, and it is patient, kind, dealeth not perversely, is not puffed up, is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. And with Michael it says, Who is like to God? And with David it prays, “Send forth Thy light and truth; they have conducted me and brought me unto Thy holy hill and into Thy tabernacles.” (Ps. xlii.) “Give me understanding and I will search Thy law and I will keep it with my whole heart.” (Ps. cxviii.)

Therefore, as is clear, the non-Catholic who before fancied that love for God above all things was so hard as to be rare, and was too hard for him, and who, as a result of this fancy, did not love God, but now knows that love for God is so easy as to be common, and tries to make these acts and consequently succeeds in making them and thence loves to do anything commanded by Our Lord, and loves to hear and learn what Our Lord has commanded—such a non-Catholic will certainly not make our teaching an occasion for excusing himself from receiving Baptism or entering the one true Church. Rather he will love the Catholic Church all the more for

being proved to be the only organization which through all the ages has kept for the human race the true concept of love for God and man, and has defended against enemies, within and without her pale, that the greatest and first commandment and the second which is like to it and their substantial observance are not exiled from the minds and hearts of the masses of humanity, but have a home there under divine providence, and that perfect contrition, which is practically the only plank of salvation offered by providence for the vast majority of the souls of adults before and since the coming of Our Lord, is not made by God a plank such as only a few can easily grasp and be saved.

The objection supposes that under our guidance, our non-Catholic fancies that love is easy and common, but then finally practises only a love which is not love, a charity which is not charity, a faith without works, or a Quietistic, Jansenistic, Lutheran, or Calvinistic passivism or fanaticism, which waits for grace and flatters itself that God will save us and even make us great saints without our doing anything ourselves for ourselves.

Or the objection supposes that he practises only modernistic sentiment that is self-sufficient without either believing in God's truth or practising His morality.

Whereas, our case is the contrary of each one of those misconceptions. It supposes in the soul a fire that is most active and flaming, charity infused by God and accepted by man's free consent, and with charity each moral virtue also infused by God and accepted by man and prompt and glad to act. And this friendly disposition toward God and this recognition of God's friendship toward one's soul, necessarily cause not only the greatest hope to obtain pardon for sins, the assistance of grace and life everlasting through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord and Redeemer, but also the firmest belief in all the sacred truths revealed by the loving and beloved God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived, and the most loving willingness to obey in all things, not only Him of whom the Father said: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, Hear ye Him," but also the Church, to which the Son of God said: "He that heareth you heareth Me, teach all nations, and teach them to observe all things

whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you (in your teaching) all days even to the consummation of the world."

We have no thought of hiding from non-Catholics, as some objectors might suspect, the teaching of Our Lord that out of His church there is no salvation for those who culpably refuse to obey His command to enter it and honor it and reverence it and obey it and in it receive the means He has confided to it to sanctify and save their souls. Just as we have no thought to hide from them His command to receive Baptism or Penance or Extreme Unction as His ordinary means for the remission of sins.

But might we not ask of the objectors, that they themselves may not think of hiding what the catechism and the Council of Trent and many of the Supreme Pontiffs have taught about Baptism and Penance of desire as Our *Lord's extraordinary means* of the remission of sins since His coming, and about what all Catholic theologians teach with regard to these same acts of love as God's *ordinary means* for the remission of sins for all adults before the institution of the Christian sacraments?

According to his plan to restore all things in Christ, Pope Pius X taught the world that freedom from mortal sin and a right intention are sufficient dispositions for daily communion, and that no confessor must deter any one of any age or condition who has these dispositions from approaching daily. Moreover, for those who receive habitually every day or almost every day in the week, he abrogated weekly confession as a necessary condition for gaining the indulgences attached to these communions. Further, he proclaimed that any child who has the use of reason must not be deterred from daily communion and is bound to Paschal communion as well as, and as soon as, to the Paschal confession. Besides, he taught that in case of urgent necessity a very short form is sufficient for validly conferring Extreme Unction. Moreover, he made new laws under which marriage is easier for the parties to contract and more certain after it is contracted. He taught that no quasi-revelation is required to be a candidate for the priesthood. He gave greater freedom for religious women or men to confess to a priest approved by



the ordinary of the diocese. Previous pontiffs heartily approved what Pius IX calls the restoration of the sweetness of the Sacred Heart to the administration of the sacrament of Penance, the tribunal of divine mercy to sinners.

What fears in many lest these generous rulings or teachings would occasion frequent abuses! However, the teachings were diffused among the masses and the rules were executed, and where now are the fears? The answer is seen in crowded confessionals and communion rails and the revival of faith and the reformation of morals and the almost worldwide beginning of the restoration of all things in Christ among Catholic peoples, even where their governments are more active than ever to induce them to apostatize from God.

And who were those who had been, at least in the last three centuries, the chief promoters of rigoristic abuses in the Church, and of the reverence of fear, when there should have been the greater and more Christian and more Catholic reverence of hope and love? Who were those to whom the devotion to the Sacred Heart, which projects the love of Our Lord before the eyes of the masses, and calls on the masses to see how much He has done and suffered for them, and how He longs and expects to be loved by the masses in return—who were those to whom this devotion and its pictures and statues and patrons and sodalities and shrines were at first an object of ridicule and satire, and then of hate and rage when it had triumphed at Rome and throughout the world until it became to them, even as a red rag to a bull? Who were those who with iconoclast vandalism broke many venerable wayside crucifixes before which peasants, scholars, nobles and kings had devoutly knelt and prayed during centuries, and who replaced them by others with the hands nailed close together above the head to express the blasphemy that the crucified Christ did not die for all, but only for a few, as the ancient statues had proclaimed that He died for absolutely all, by having the arms stretched out wide open to embrace all in His love? Who, we ask, were those modern Pharisees, whose delight was to multiply obligations and ever bind new loads on consciences by inventing sins which do not exist, and by severe interpretations of true laws and causing doubts and scruples and troubles and desperation of conscience, and thus,

as St. Antoninus says, being authors of edification for hell? The Pharisees taught that man was for the Sabbath and not the Sabbath for man; and who were these Pharisees who taught that man is for the sacraments and not the sacraments for man, and that these sacred signs were instituted by our Divine Lord and Redeemer and Saviour, who came only for sinners and was called Jesus, because He was to save us from our sins, not as a means of grace, but as rewards of grace and merit? Who were they? All know they were the Jansenists and the Jansenists were the brood of Calvin and Luther. True, they at least pretended to believe in the Catholic Church and the successor of Peter and divine traditions and the authority of the Fathers and Councils, and they accepted seven sacraments and the evangelical counsels, and many other tenets rejected by the reformers. But their teachings on original sin and free will, or rather its non-existence, and on absolute antecedent predestination to damnation without regard for future personal free demerits and on the nature and distribution, or rather restriction, of actual graces, and on the sinfulness of fear of God's punishments or hope for His rewards, on the denial of the difference between venial and mortal sins, and on many other fundamental points, were identical with, or very similar to, those of Calvin and Luther. And in common with these, their masters, they insisted that love for God is hard and rare, or even impossible.

Modernists aimed to conciliate the Catholic Church with modern science (so called) by the adoption of liberal non-dogmatic Protestantism. And Jansenists aimed to conciliate the Catholic Church with ancient science (so called) by the adoption of diluted dogmatic Protestantism. But both aimed at revolutionizing the Church from within and not from without, and not by visible separation from it.

We can not but feel that the following picture of the diffusion of Jansenism is overdrawn. But even so, we see from the fact that such a picture was drawn by such a pen, that this diffusion was great. In a private memorial to Clement XI. (A. D. 1705) Fénelon thus wrote:

"The experience of sixty-five years clearly proves that the Jansenist sect is not to be brought back by gentle means. Unless rigorous measures are used, there is no danger that the Church may not

**fear.** Never, not even in the hour of its most rapid growth, had Calvinism so many partisans and defenders. Belgium and Holland are deeply infected with the poison of the new error. The Duke of Medina-Coeli favors the introduction of Jansenistic works into Naples. The doctrine has reached as far as Spain. Even in Rome, Cardinal Casanate is suspected of having some connection with the sect. In France Cardinal de Noailles is so completely in the power of its leaders that for the past ten years it has been impossible to free him from their snares. Many bishops follow his example. There are still some who would confirm the rest in the right way, if the multitude were not drawn into the wrong path by these leaders. What shall I say of the Religious Orders? Nearly all the Dominicans go beyond the limits assigned by the Congregation de Auxiliis, and conspire with the Jansenists to maintain the theory of compulsory grace. The Barefooted Carmelites obstinately preach the same doctrine. The Augustinians, misled by the illustrious name of their holy patron, insensibly adhere to the 'Augustinus' of Ypres. The Regular Canons of St. Genevieve are animated by the same sentiment. The Benedictines of St. Maur and of St. Vannes unite all their efforts to secure the triumph of Jansenism. The Premonstrants have so openly displayed their partizanship, that from the very beginning of the contest, they have been known in Belgium as the White Jansenists. The Oratorians of M. de Bérulle inculcate the same errors, not only by their dogmatic writings, as in the theology of Juenin, but by academic theses and in the spiritual direction of the ladies of the Court. The most learned among the Belgian Capuchins have taken so little trouble to hide their real sentiments that the superiors have been obliged to remove the lectors and guardians from their charges. The Recollets present the same example. Even the Missionaries of St. Lazarus, so far removed from that faction, while they remembered the teachings of St. Vincent de Paul, are becoming cold and yielding and seem to incline by degrees to the same direction. I know one seminary in which the professor is spreading the poison of Jansenism. The members of St. Sulpice alone have the courage to battle against the contagion. The cardinal archbishop accordingly esteems and loves them little."

This graphic picture from the pen of the pious, gifted and amiable author of "*Télémaque*" might be judged as overdrawn, at least with regard to the Religious, even from the one fact that he does not mention the Jesuits as standing shoulder to shoulder with the members of St. Sulpice, and even being in the front of all the valiant soldiers of Rome and bearing the chief brunt of this long and fierce war. The Jesuit system on God's graces and its emphasis of God's bounty and of man's free will, besides the special loyalty of the Company of Ignatius to the Holy See, must not be left

out by those who seek the historical causes of the common hatred of Jansenists and Calvinists for Jesuits. Bellarmine began his studies at Louvain in the same year that Baius was intalled as chancellor of that university, and was one of the first to refute that predecessor of Jansenius. Jansenius almost began his career by an attack on the Society and his "Augustinus" is mainly aimed against the Jesuits. According to Bougaud, in his life of Blessed Margaret Mary, the decisive battle against Jansenism was won at Rome in the triumph of the cause of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, and its solemn approval after long litigation, during which the Jesuits were its advocates. And according to the same historian, this triumph of the sons of Ignatius in the field of theology and piety occasioned their decisive defeat in the field of politics. From thenceforward the Jansenists gave up hopes from theology and took to politics, and joined hands with the eighteenth-century freethinking haters of Christianity and God, and its unscrupulous courtiers and courtesans, and with their aid united all the Bourbon sovereigns to demand the Society's suppression from Clement XIV.

Moreover, the Franciscans were the first to denounce Baius and obtained his condemnation by the Paris Sorbonne.

The writer is glad of this occasion to acknowledge that he has derived more aid in finding matter for this work from the great Dominican Cardinal Gotti, than from any other author, except the Dominican Angel of the Schools. And Cardinal Gotti wrote shortly after the date of the above memorial.

But granting that Fénelon's picture is overdrawn, yet it remains true in substance and its truth is manifest to all students of the history of dogmatic or moral theology or of canon law, or of liturgy, or of Scriptural science. Our teachers have been obliged to open our eyes to Jansenistic traps and deceits in nearly every chapter of every treatise of these sciences. And how often we have had our attention called to Jansenistic passages being copied and slipping into works written by the greatest Catholic theologians, orators, ascetics, or catechists at moments when the latter were, like good Homer, nodding. Errors of Jansenists had to be condemned by the Holy See in 1561, 1579, 1641, 1656, 1664, 1665, 1667,

1690, 1700, 1705, 1713, 1718, 1721, 1722, 1725, 1756, and 1794.

In his treatise on the virtues of faith, hope and charity, on page 427, the present Cardinal Billot speaks of the maxim that the act of perfect love is a thing of great difficulty, and he roundly characterizes it as a prejudice which is a residue from Jansenism. And Canon Berardi on page 90 of the first volume of his able work, entitled "Confessor's Practice," says:

"Indeed, the opinion about the great difficulty of eliciting an act of perfect charity is widely diffused, but it must be false and it derived its origin, or at least much of its fomenting from Jansenism."

In our judgment, for reasons which will become apparent in the progress of this study, and for other reasons which we will state immediately, it might have been more accurate and nearer to the whole truth, to say that the wide spread of this false opinion among Catholics has been either caused or occasioned by Lutheranism, Calvinism, Jansenism, Quietism, or Contritionism. It has been caused in some individuals by love for some of the false maxims of some of these systems, and it has been occasioned in others by hate for some of these principles, and by allowing such hate to carry them so far as to deny that love for God is easy. And by this very denial, they unwittingly fell into the trap set for them by their hated adversaries.

There were Calvinism, Lutheranism, and Jansenism constantly proclaiming: Fear of God's punishments; hope for His rewards; shame for sin, base in itself, make a man a hypocrite and a greater sinner. Every act of the will not motivated by pure love is a sin. Whether we eat, or whether we drink, or whatsoever we do, unless we do it for the glory of God, out of pure love for God, we commit a sin against God. And if we have any fear of God's punishments, or hope for His rewards, we can not then love God for His own sake. The Quietists were constantly proclaiming that hope, or love for God good to us, if not a vice, is an imperfection and must be shunned by him who has love for God, or at least by him who is in a state of a high degree of love.

Not to speak of other literatures, our English literature is largely Calvinistic, Lutheranistic, Jansenistic, or Quietistic.

How often editors who have never learned the A B C of Christian theology or philosophy dogmatize against the baseness of fear of God's punishments, or hope for His rewards. Horror for these motives has recently been put forward by Mexican bandits in their pronunciamientos, as reasons for their endeavors to abolish Catholicity and Christianity and all religion.

And, finally, there were all the Protestants preaching against confession and absolution, and even against Baptism, or any other sacrament as truly conferring justifying grace on the attrite.

Well, in these circumstances, it is not marvelous that the too practical pastor or theologian would be so shortsighted and antagonistic as to tell the Catholic people that what they need are fear and shame and hope and Baptism and confession and absolution, and that perfect contrition or love, of the kind and degree sufficient for the remission of mortal sin, is rare save in the case of the saints, who are always comparatively few.

We said not only "pastor" but also "theologian"; and our reason for saying also "theologian" is made clear by a parallel instance in the history of theology. In the year 1907, Father Joseph Kern, S. J., of the University of Innsbruck, published his learned and consoling treatise on the sacrament of Extreme Unction. By solid arguments from Scripture, Tradition, and the teachings of the Church, and theological reasons, he establishes the truth that, according to the institution of Our Lord, the essential end of Extreme Unction is the perfect health of the soul for its *immediate entry into glory*, unless the restoration of bodily health of a man who would naturally die be more expedient, and that this perfect health necessitates and includes the taking away of all impediments which would retard a soul migrating from its body from entry into glory, and that any debt of temporal punishment would be an impediment, and that this, too, therefore, is wiped out. He does not claim that the effect of remission of all temporal punishment is so immediate after Extreme Unction as after Baptism. According to the Council of Trent, "this sacrament has been regarded by the Fathers as consummative not only of the sacrament of Penance, but also of the whole

Christian life, which ought to be a perpetual penance." "The reality and effect of this sacrament are explained by those words: "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." For this reality is the grace of the Holy Spirit, whose unction wipes off relinquencies if there still be any to be expiated, and the *remnants* of sin, etc." The Catechism of the Council of Trent adds: "The utility of the Holy Unction is this, that it frees the soul from the languor and weakness which it contracted by its sins, and from *all* the other remnants of sin." And *one* of the remnants of sin is the debt of *temporal punishment*. So that somehow there is in Extreme Unction the efficacy to remit even the last remnants of the debt of punishment. Perhaps this sacrament operates for this effect in a manner similar to that in which it operates for the cure of the body; and this is thought to be done by the supernatural actual interior graces which are given to the soul, and awaken in it such a soothing confidence in the divine mercies, that the body is so influenced by the soul's state from its natural connection with the body, and it is so disposed to respond to natural aids, that it is cured. Perhaps, likewise, the remission of all temporal punishments is through the mediate instrumentality of this spiritual disposition, which is immediately caused by the efficacy of the sacrament. But this is beside the present point. Whatever be the mode, before the time of the Council of Trent, and especially during the great age of St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure, Blessed Albert the Great, Scotus, Alexander of Hales, and others of their high class, theologians, and especially the great Doctors, explicitly taught that Our Lord instituted Extreme Unction to prepare the soul for immediate entry into glory and to remit all temporal punishment.

But then came the denials of the existence of purgatory, and of the utility of *masses*, indulgences, and prayers for the dead, and then only did many minor theologians begin to introduce the hitherto unheard-of teaching that Extreme Unction was *not* instituted to prepare the soul for immediate entry into glory.

Therefore, is there not some reason for our conjecture that the denial that acts of perfect contrition and of perfect love

are easy was often occasioned by the extremeness of the antagonism of Catholic theologians to the denial of the necessity of confession and to the affirmation of the necessity of love for justification, for merit, or even for escaping sinfulness, even in eating and drinking.

This opinion of ours does not exclude the undoubted truth that Jansenism was often the direct cause of the spread of this error among Catholics. Semi-Arianism followed Arianism; Semi-Pelagianism, Pelagianism; Semi-Quietism, Quietism; and Jansenism, which was the successor of Calvinism and Lutheranism and followed this Protestantism, as Semi-Protestantism, was certainly for a long time followed by Semi-Jansenism. And as will appear from considering the rudiments of Jansenism and Lutheranism and Quietism and Calvinism, he who held all of these rudiments, or even one of them, also asserted that love for God was, if not impossible, at least hard and rare. And even if he had asserted that love for God is most easy, it would have been impossible for him to practise it, if he sincerely held the act of love to be what they say it is, or if he had held that God or Christ or the Holy Ghost or the Church or man is so unworthy of love and so worthy of hate as these isms all represent them.

Cardinal Billot and Canon Berardi seem to consider Jansenism as the only occasion or cause operating within the Church to spread the false belief that love for God above all things for His own sake is hard and rare. Whereas, Quietism also must be considered as a factor by him who would solve the problem, how this false belief became so general among Catholics. For we see all fear of God's punishments and all hope for His rewards and all love for the virtues excluded by Molinos from his "Truly Interior Life," and by Fénelon from his "State of Most Pure Love," and by nearly all the Quietists, whose name is legion. For some form of Quietism had to be condemned by Clement V and the Council of Vienne in the Beghards in the year 1311, by John XXII in Master Eckhart of Cologne in the year 1329; by the Spanish Inquisition in the Illuminati of Andalusia in the year 1575; by the Capuchin Friar Joseph and his friend, Cardinal Richelieu, in 1635 in three Religious who were making thousands of proselytes; by Innocent XI in Michael



Molinos in the year 1687; by the Holy See, beginning in that year, in eighty (80) works; and by Innocent XII in the year 1699 in Fénelon's "Explanation of the Maxims of the Saints."

The writer often saw at Rome in the seventies of the last century, a saintly old priest, who was detained there as the author of a little work entitled, like that of Fénelon's protégée, "Maxims of the Saints," and reviving the errors of the great Archbishop of Cambrai and of Madame de Guyon. He was the founder of a religious order which non-Catholics, as well as Catholics, regard as a home of heroism. He had instilled his maxims into the minds of its leaders and was removed from all communication with it, and Rome took it under her immediate control and corrected its errors, and has used it as a means of most beautiful and widespread corporal and spiritual mercies.

Poulain in his "Graces of Interior Prayer," Chapter XXVII on Quietism, explains how many orthodox writers leave on the mind of readers who are not theologians impressions which are Quietistic. They inveigh against natural activity so strongly that many feel that we should avoid not only anxiety and restlessness, but all activity, and wait for God to do all; and against self love, so that the unwary feel that they should exclude not only selfishness which is unreasonable, but all reasonable care for self and even all care for our salvation. They tell us to ask for nothing and to refuse nothing, so that the unthinking understand them to teach, with Wickliffe, that we should not pray to God for special favors, as if Our Lord's prayer in the Garden of Olives had been improper. Of course, Religious should not refuse all charges which are disagreeable, nor unreasonably ask for such as are agreeable, and this is the sense in which St. Francis de Sales used the maxims—"Ask for nothing. Refuse nothing."

Some writers on the excellence of the conformity to the Will of God and its practice leave some readers under the impression that this practice would make us saints without the practice of fear or hope, or the moral virtues, or the mortification and self-denial necessary for their practice. These orthodox writers often smack strongly of the heresy of Luther and of his faith without works, and even of Buddhism and its Nirvana as the essence or acme of sanctity.

The thoughtful reader of the literature of our day is struck with the deluge of pantheism, which, though far from universal, is becoming more and more general. He sees pantheism taught in Dr. Eliot's programme of his new religion and in Mrs. Eddy's "Science and Health and Key to the Scriptures," and in Albert Pike's "Dogma and Morals of Freemasonry," and in many text-books placed in the hands of the boys and girls of the senior class by their professors of philosophy, and in many socialistic documents, and even in some sermons preached from Christian pulpits and reported by the newspapers. Quietism has sometimes taught pantheism explicitly, but the passivism, not only of Quietism, but also of Jansenism, Lutheranism, Calvinism, and their exaggeration of the greatness of the part of God in the acts of our wills, and of the smallness of the activity of man's co-operation, has made the step to rank pantheism a very short one in minds imbued or tinged with those heresies. Therefore, it is a manifest fact that Quietism has been a most active agent in seducing Catholic minds, whether we consider its activities from within or from without the Church's pale, and, therefore, there are good reasons to think that not only Jansenism, but also Quietism, has had much to do in occasioning, or in causing the erroneous belief that acts of love for God above all things for His own sake are extremely hard and rare.

It is not impossible that some readers, seeing that we are writing a whole book on perfect contrition and love being easy for all, may fear lest we, too, would fall into some one of these isms, or leave our readers under the impression that fear and hope, and the sense of turpitude of sin are not to be cultivated. Again, we must remind them that this is not an exhortation, but a study, and a study not of fear or hope or the sense of the turpitude of sin, or of mortification, or of self-denial, but of perfect contrition and of love and of their facility in practice. And hence, we are called on to study just now only that which is sweet, and to consider the physic of fear and shame, etc., only as they easily give the health of love, or to consider fear and shame, etc., as strengthened by love when it exists and reacts. One reason for dwelling on these errors is to set ourselves right in the reader's eyes and to make him feel secure that we will avoid them, and to gain

his cordial confidence for this study which we are to make together.

We will now consider these errors in the texts of the Church's decrees.

We submit the following decree of the Council of Trent on the Sacrament of Penance, session 14, chapter 4:

"The Synod teaches, moreover, that although it sometimes happens that this contrition is perfect through charity and reconciles man with God before this sacrament is actually received, the said reconciliation, nevertheless, is not to be ascribed to that contrition independently of the desire of the sacrament, which (desire) is included therein (in contrition). And as to that imperfect contrition which is called attrition because it is commonly conceived either from the consideration of the baseness of sin, or from the fear of hell and of punishment, it declares that if, with the hope of pardon, it excludes the wish to sin, it not only does not make a man a hypocrite and a greater sinner, but that it is even a gift of God and an impulse of the Holy Ghost, who does not, indeed, as yet dwell in the penitent, but only moves him, whereby the penitent being assisted, prepares a way for himself unto justice. And although this (attrition) can not of itself, without the sacrament of Penance, conduct the sinner to justification, yet does it dispose him to obtain the grace of God in the sacrament of Penance. For, smitten profitably with this fear, the Ninevites at the preaching of Jonas did fearful penance and obtained mercy from the Lord. Wherefore, falsely do some calumniate Catholic writers, as if they had maintained that the sacrament of Penance confers grace without any good motion on the part of those who receive it; and falsely also do they assert that contrition is extorted and forced, not free and voluntary.

"Canon V. If any one saith that the contrition which is acquired by means of the examination, collection, and detestation of sins, whereby the sinner, pondering on the grievousness, the multitude, the turpitude of his sins, the loss of eternal blessedness and the eternal damnation which he has incurred, having therewith the purpose of a better life, is not a true and profitable sorrow, does not prepare for grace, but makes a man a hypocrite and a greater sinner; in fine, that this (contrition) is a forced and not a free and voluntary sorrow; let him be anathema."

Such were the errors of Luther and Calvin and their followers, which were condemned by the Council of Trent. And each one of the leaders of the Jansenists taught errors identical, or almost identical with these, and were duly condemned by the Holy See. The following are some specimens of their condemned propositions:

"Every love of a rational creature is either vicious cupidity by

which the world is loved and which is prohibited by John, or that laudable charity by which, poured into the heart by the Holy Spirit, God is loved." Thirty-eighth proposition of Baius, condemned by Pius V, Gregory XIII, and Urban VIII.

The forty-fourth proposition of Quesnel is identical with this in substance and nearly so in words.

"If only fear of punishment animates penance, the more violent this penance is, the more it leads to desperation."—Quesnel, prop. 60.

"Fear restrains only the hand, but the heart is addicted to sin as long as it is not led by love of justice."—Quesnel, prop. 61.

"He who abstains from evil only from fear of punishment commits evil in his heart and is guilty before God."—Quesnel, prop. 62.

"Whereas, between dominant cupidity and dominant charity there are placed (by the pseudo Synod of Pistoia) no intermediate affections, implanted by nature itself and by their own nature laudable, which, together with the love for beatitude and the natural propensity to good, have remained as last lineaments and remnants of the image of God (from Augustine on the Spirit and the Letter, c. 28); just as if between divine love, which leads to the Kingdom, and illicit human love which is condemned, there were not a licit human love which is not reprehended (from Augustine, serm. 349 on Charity)—false, elsewhere condemned.

"The doctrine which holds that fear of punishments in general can be said only not to be evil, if it attains at least to restraining the hand; as if the very fear of hell which faith teaches is to be inflicted on sin, is not in itself good and useful, as a supernatural gift and a movement inspired by God preparing for the love of justice—false, rash, pernicious, injurious to the divine gifts, elsewhere condemned, contrary to the doctrine of the Council of Trent, and also to the common teaching of the Fathers that according to the usual order of preparation for justice, it is necessary that there enter first fear, through which there comes charity; fear the medicine, charity health (from Aug. on I Ep. of John c. 4, treatise 9; on John's Gospel, treatise 41, n. 10, etc., etc.)"

This last and lengthy passage is from Pope Pius VI in his condemnation in the year 1794 of the errors of the pseudo-Synod of Pistoia.

Hence, as we see from these extracts, Luther and Calvin and their primitive disciples and Baius and the Jansenists, in general, down to the Synod of Pistoia, agree in saying that neither fear of God's punishments, nor hope for His rewards, nor a sense of the turpitude of sin, or of the beauty of any virtue but charity, can be a motive for a disposition sufficient

for justification with the actual reception of the sacrament of Baptism or Penance.

As has been said, it was the duty of Catholics to oppose the Lutheran, Calvinistic, and Jansenistic teaching that every act which is not motived by charity is bad, and it was their duty to insist on the Catholic teaching that acts are good when done from fear of God's punishments, or hope for His rewards, or the sense of the turpitude of sin, or, in fine, from the motive of any of the virtues inferior in nobility to charity.

However, because their adversaries insisted too much on charity, this was no justification for them to ignore it; or, because it was right to teach that the other virtues are easier for beginners, it was not right to teach or imply that love for God is not also easy for them, though in many respects it is easier for the advanced. And, above all, it was wrong to misrepresent the act of love as a thing that is almost or absolutely impossible. For thus, they fell into other errors of the very Calvinists, Lutheranists and Jansenists, whom they were opposing. In their zeal for the other Catholic teachings, they should not have opposed or contradicted the following from the Council of Trent, session 6, chapter ii, on keeping the commandments and on the necessity and possibility thereof:

"For no one, how much soever justified, ought to think himself exempt from the observance of the commandments; no one ought to make use of that rash saying prohibited by the Fathers under an anathema, that the observance of the commandments of God is impossible for one that is justified. For God commands not impossibilities, but by commanding, both admonishes thee to do what thou art able, and to pray for what thou art not able (to do), and aids thee that thou mayest be able, whose commandments are not heavy (1 John v. 3), whose yoke is sweet and whose burden light (Matt. xi. 30). For whoso are the sons of God, love Christ; but they who love Him, keep His commandments, as Himself testifies; which assuredly with the divine help they can do."

Errors of Cornelius Jansenius, extracted from his "Augustinus" and condemned in 1653, 1656, 1664, and 1705:

"I. Some precepts of God are impossible to men just, willing, and trying, according to the present powers which they have; there is also lacking to them the grace by which they may become possible."

Therefore, since to love God is a commandment of God, as we know not only from Moses, but from Our Lord and the apostles, and since the Council teaches with Our Lord and St. John, that no commandment of God is impossible, or even hard, the solemn decree of Trent manifestly teaches that to love God is not hard. Hence it was right to insist that there is no love for God above all things without the will to keep all His commandments. But it was not therefore, right to follow the Lutherans, Calvinists, and Jansenists in the errors here condemned. It would have been right to explain that the act of love, as defined by these adversaries, is impossible for many causes, and especially for this, that it is a chimera in itself and an absurd intrinsic impossibility, as will appear from our explanation soon to come. But it was wrong to omit the Catholic repudiation of this absurd concept, and to omit that there is a commandment strictly obliging each one to love God above all things, and that the very existence of this commandment with the teaching of Our Lord, and of the apostle of love, that no divine commands are hard, manifests that acts of love are easy.

Here we must call attention to the controversy between the Contritionists and the Attritionists. Both were and are loyal Catholics. The question between them is, whether attrition can be a sufficient disposition for justification without some degree of love for God for His own sake. As is clear, if there were love for God for His own sake *above* all things, then there would be not merely attrition but contrition in the proper sense. If we love God for His own sake to such a degree that, from such pure love we are firmly resolved to keep all of His commandments, whenever they may oblige us, then we are said to love Him for His own sake above all things. But we may be determined by love for God to sincerely say only "*I would like to obey Him,*" or only "*I will to obey Him in some things, but not in all things that gravely oblige me.*" To this disposition may be applied the popular saying that "*Hell is paved with good intentions.*" For we may suppose that many are lost and in hell who had such good intentions or impulses or velleities of love for God, and yet, had not the will to keep all the commandments. They saw and approved the better way, but followed the worse.

There was once a Catholic who loved the Church and all her teachings and practices, but rarely came to Mass on Sundays, and had not made his Easter confession or communion for many years. Still, he never missed the kissing of the crucifix on Good Friday or the receiving of the palm on Palm Sunday, or of the ashes on Ash Wednesday. His faith was that of the Crusader, and he was too ready to fight for it, and die for it, but not to live it, in its completeness, and he truly said "I am weak on practice, but strong on faith." After years of waiting for the return of this stray sheep to the pasture of the sacraments, the aged pastor, on one Ash Wednesday, after marking his forehead with the holy ashes, and pronouncing in Latin, the words, "Remember, man, that thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return," added "And remember also, N. N., that these ashes will not save your soul without confession."

A lay chum of N. N. aimed to take hold of the same sword with which the pastor had made that home thrust, and to turn it around and around in the wound of his former comrade in arms, by the following picture of a scene from the life of the "Laziest man in Georgia." One afternoon in August, this man stretched himself at his full tall length in a horizontal posture for a much needed rest upon the soft grass under the thick shade of a giant live-oak tree, which extended its long limbs over a broad oasis in the lawn before the front porch of his colonial mansion. A philosophic friend called, but was unwilling to disturb the stertorous slumberer and fetched a rocking-chair from the porch, and lit his pipe, and sat him down in the shade of the same tree to enjoy the fanning of the soft zephyr gently blowing from the southwest, and the contemplation of human nature in the features of the subject before him as he lay stretched out in the form of a cross. Gradually, as the sun traveled on its course down from the zenith toward the western horizon, the shade of the tree slowly receded from above the slumberer, until, finally only his left hand was remaining under the cover of shade, and his face and whole body were exposed to the direct broiling rays of the dog-days' sun. The slumberer awoke and yawned, and sighed, and although he had special hate for the sun, and love for the shade, he had a predominating hate for exertion

and a proportionate love of his own ease, and could not make up his mind to roll over out of the sun, but kept lamenting his lot, and how hot and tired he felt, and uttering the ejaculation: "Oh, me, how I wish I were over there where my left hand is, in the shade!"

Here was sincere longing love for the fruition of the coolness of the shady spot, but it was not a love above the other love for the enjoyment of ease and inaction. It was, in a way, affectionate, but it was not efficacious or effective. It was a love of complacency in the object or shade, and, besides, it wished this object to beloved self, but this wish was too weak to be efficient.

If any reader be tempted to disdain as frivolous this leaf from the annals of the life of the "Laziest man in Georgia," we beg his more respectful consideration for the following parallel verses from the inspired book of Proverbs:

"The way of the lazy man is as a hedge of thorns. I passed by the field of the lazy man and by the vineyard of the foolish man, and behold, it was all filled with nettles, and thorns had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall was broken down. Which, when I had seen, I laid it up in my heart, and by the example I received instruction. Thou wilt sleep a little, said I, thou wilt slumber a little, thou wilt fold thy hands a little to rest, and poverty shall come to thee as a runner and beggary as an armed man. The lazy man seems to himself wiser than seven men that speak sound maxims. Go to the ant, thou lazy man, and consider her ways and learn wisdom. Although she hath no guide, nor master, nor captain, she provideth her food for herself in summer and gathereth her food in the harvest time. The souls of the effeminate shall be hungry. He that is loose and slack in his work, is the brother of him that wasteth his own works. How long wilt thou sleep, O lazy man? When wilt thou rise out of thy sleep? As the door turneth upon its hinges, so doth the lazy man upon his bed. The lazy man is dejected with fear, and he saith there is a lion in the street and a lioness in the road. His hands have refused to work at all. He hideth his hand under his armpit, and it grieveth him to turn it to his mouth. He longeth and desireth all day, and his desires cause his death. He willeth and he willeth not."



The arrangement of these maxims is the writer's, but their every sentence is from the inspired book of Proverbs.

How different on the one hand, the love of the lazy man of Georgia for the shade, and of the sluggard of Proverbs for the harvest and its bread and wine, and on the other hand, the love of the mariner for the safety of himself and his crew and his ship, when he throws overboard even his heavy chest of gold as the last resort to escape from sinking beneath the stormy waves.

But in both of these cases there is question of interested love, called the love of concupiscence by St. Thomas, and by theologians and philosophers in general. And the Angelic Doctor reminds us that it is like our love for our horse or wine, and not like our love of benevolence for a friend to whom we wish well for his sake and not our own.

But all of us have likewise seen cases of such sincere, pure affection, which was also too weak to be properly efficient.

Here is a son of a family who is an idler and tippler, and is ruining his family's fortune, and honor, and happiness, and yet, what affection he may keep in his heart for each one of his kin, and how he may cling to tiny heirlooms, and how strong and swift his wrath against any word of a stranger, who would dare to seem to wish to blacken his family's name.

Here is pure love, but it is not above love of ease and drink, and can not be compared to love for God above all things.

However, we may have known of such a spoiled child, who had gone on in his evil ways for years, until one day there happened to be on duty in the town, a new marshal, who was no respecter of persons, and who arrested this young gentleman with disorderly plebeian citizens, and confined them together for one night in the lock-up, and lo, from that day forward, the aristocratic prodigal son became a true Christian gentleman and a model of industry and sobriety.

It is natural to suppose that fear of punishment awakened in him also a deeper sense of the turpitude of sin, and a stronger affection for the worthy members of the family. But, for the sake of argument, let us suppose that the contrary was the fact, and that there was no more of disinterested love for the family after this conversion than before it. There we have the notion of the degree of love for God required in

attrition by the Contritionists, and we understand what they mean when they say that attrition is not sufficient for justification with the actual reception of a Christian sacrament, unless there be a degree of love for God which is sincere and pure, though not above all things.

The mind of every reader is, we think, now prepared to appreciate the following decree of the Holy Office, dated May 5, 1667:

“About the controversy, whether that attrition which is conceived from the fear of hell, and excludes the will of sinning, and which includes the hope of pardon, to obtain grace in the sacrament of Penance, requires, moreover, some act of love for God, some persons denying, others affirming, and all censuring the adverse opinion—His Holiness commands that, if hereafter on the matter of the aforesaid attrition, any shall write or edit books on the Scriptures or shall teach or preach, or in any other way instruct penitents, or other scholars, they shall not have the audacity to stigmatize with the brand of any theological censure, or of any other injury or insult, either opinion, whether the one denying the necessity of some love for God in the aforesaid attrition conceived from fear of hell, which to-day seems the more common among scholastic theologians; or on the other hand, the other asserting the necessity of the said love, until something shall have been defined on this matter by this Holy See.”

As is clear, this decree is non-committal and decides only that each side is free to keep and teach its own opinion, but is no longer free to call the other opinion by bad names, such as “heretical,” “erroneous,” “proximate to heresy,” “smacking of heresy,” “suspected of heresy,” or “rash.”

The reader may desire to know something about the chief basis of the merits of these opinions. It is seen in the *italicized* words of the following decree of the Council of Trent on the subject of the manner of justification, in chapter 6 of session 6:

“Now they (adults) are disposed unto the said justice when excited and assisted by Divine grace, conceiving faith by hearing, they are freely moved toward God, believing those things to be true which God has revealed and promised, and this especially, that God justifies the impious by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; and when, understanding themselves to be sinners, they, by turning themselves from the fear of Divine *justice*, whereby they are profitably agitated, to consider the mercy of God, are raised unto hope, confiding that God will be propitious to them for Christ’s

sake; and *they begin to love God as the Fountain of all justice*; and are therefore moved against sins by a certain hatred and detestation; to wit, by that penitence which must be performed before Baptism; lastly, when they purpose to receive Baptism to begin a new life and to keep the commandments of God."

The Contritionists thus argued from these words:

Here there is the definition of attrition required before Baptism. But according to the Council, in this attrition, penitents *begin* to love God as the Fountain of all justice, and these words manifestly mean some degree of actual pure love for God already attained.

However, the Attritionists insist on the word *begin* and interpret it according to the following words of St. Thomas, 2. 2. q. 17, a. 8:

"In the order of generation hope is prior to charity. For as one is introduced to loving God by this, that fearing to be punished by Him, he ceases from sin, as Augustine says; so also hope introduces to charity, inasmuch as one hoping to be remunerated by God is inflamed to loving God, and to keeping His commandments."

From these words the Attritionists argue that either fear alone, or hope alone is an introduction to charity, or love for God, and introduction is the same as beginning, and hence it follows that fear alone, or hope alone is, according to St. Thomas and St. Augustine and also the Council of Trent, a beginning of love, and hence the Council does *not* teach for pure attrition, there *must* be already attained any degree of pure love.

The Attritionists add that the Holy See recognized as more common even in the seventeenth century, and also approved as *safe* to be taught, their own opinion, and that it is hard to understand how the Holy See could have been prudent in calling Attritionism *safe* and in taking such an attitude, and permitting to expose the sacrament to nullity, and souls to remaining in mortal sin and being lost, if the Contritionists are possibly right in holding that, according to the divine plan, over which the Holy See has no power, some degree of pure love is always required among the dispositions necessary for a valid Baptism or absolution.

The Attritionists follow up these arguments by the following weighty consideration: The rules for receiving and

administering the sacraments of Baptism and Penance, which were instituted for the remission of sins, were made by our Divine Lord. And it seems most repugnant to His whole mild and sweet policy to have exacted this condition, the fulfilment of which it is hard for the subject or minister of these sacraments to know.

Therefore, this Contritionist doctrine, which could easily lead to endless scruples, can not be that of our Divine Lord.

By this time, the reader is aware that the writer is a decided Attritionist, at least in theory. However, we trust to show to the satisfaction of all, in another chapter, that he who has attrition as described by the Council of Trent will naturally and easily have also love for God for His own sake, even above all things. How heartily, then, do we subscribe to the opinion of the eminent and venerable Father Lehmkuhl, that he who has attrition, by a kind of psychological necessity, has also pure love and affection for God, at least in some degree. Although, we beg leave to differ from this grave authority as to the first sentence in the following passage:

"As the word 'love' (*diligere*) more commonly signifies not interested love, but the affection by which one is moved toward God in Himself, it is also probable that such affection *must* be found in the disposition of the penitent. For no one can deny that there can exist such affection, which, on the one hand pertains to the species of charity, but on the other is not a perfect act, namely, is not an efficient tendency or will toward God loved in Himself which is absolute and firm above all things. And neither can any one deny that by a certain moral and psychological necessity, such affection for God follows from the other acts which are necessary for due attrition. For, suppose that one hopes for pardon from God, and that he desires to enter into friendship with God. How can all affection toward God Himself, considered in Himself, be exiled from such a soul?" ("Moral Theology," Vol. II, p. 230.)

Therefore, in conclusion, as an Attritionist, we believe that Our Lord does not *exact* that every time we ask absolution we must have refiningly analyzed our motives, and must be conscious that we have in our heart some degree of pure love for Him. And neither does He *exact* that the priest, before pronouncing the words of absolution, must make the searching investigation required for him to be convinced of the certainty or probability of the existence of such a disposition in our

heart. However, if both penitent and priest are unhesitatingly convinced that love for God, even above all things, is most easy for every one who is resolved to avoid mortal sin from any proper motive, then, we not only believe, but are sure, that even such love will nearly always exist before absolution.

Is it not probable that from excessive antagonism to the Contritionists, some Attritionist theologians denied that love for God above all things is easy?

Quietism directly caused and indirectly occasioned the spread of the belief that the act of love is something that is hard and rare, or even impossible.

Molinos the Quietist was condemned by the Sovereign Pontiff on November 19, 1687. Among his propositions are the following:

"26. Those three ways: the purgative, the illuminative, and the unitive are the greatest absurdity that has been said in mysticism; since there is only one way, namely, the interior way.

"7. The soul ought not to think about rewards, or punishment, or paradise, or hell, or death, or eternity.

"1. Man ought to annihilate his own powers, and this is the interior way.

"4. By *doing nothing*, the soul annihilates itself and returns to its own principle and its own origin, which is the essence of God in which it remains transformed and divinized, and God then remains in it, itself, because then there are no longer two things united, but only one and in this manner God lives and reigns in us, and the soul annihilates itself in its operative being."

From these maxims Molinos went on drawing more than thirty conclusions, all absurd, and many too filthy for these pages.

Quietism can scarcely be mentioned in the same breath with Semi-Quietism. However, the following Semi-Quietist errors about the most pure love for God, taken from "Explanation of the Maxims of the Saints," by Francis de Salignac Fénelon, Archbishop Duke of Cambrai, etc., and condemned by Innocent XII in 1699, have also caused or occasioned the spread of the belief that the act of love is something that is hard or impossible.

"1. There is a habitual state of love for God, which is pure charity, and without any admixture of the motive of our own interest. Neither fear of punishments nor the desire of rewards has any longer any part in it. No longer is God loved on account of merit,

or on account of perfection, or on account of the felicity to be found in it.

"2. In the state of the contemplative or unitive life, there is lost every interested motive of fear and hope.

"3. What is essential in the devotion of a soul is not to do anything else than to *follow grace* step by step with infinite patience, precaution and subtlety."

On the score of passivism, Quietism and Semi-Quietism strongly remind us of primitive Protestantism as condemned in the following Canons of Trent, session 6.

"4. If any one saith, that man's free will moved and excited by God, by assenting to God exciting and calling, nowise co-operates toward disposing and preparing itself for obtaining the grace of justification, that it can not refuse its consent, if it would, but that as something inanimate, it does nothing whatever, and is merely passive, let him be anathema.

"5. If any one saith that since the fall of Adam, man's free will is lost and extinguished, or that it is a thing with only a name, yea, a name without a reality, a figment, in fine, introduced into the Church by Satan, let him be anathema.

"6. If any one saith that it is not in man's power to make his ways evil, but that the works that are evil God worketh, as well as those that are good, nor permissively only, but properly, and of Himself, in such wise that the treason of Judas is no less His own proper work than the vocation of Paul, let him be anathema."

We see the same passivism in the following errors of Cornelius Jansenius, extracted from his "Augustinus" and condemned first on May 31, 1653:

"2. In the state of fallen nature, interior grace is never resisted.

"3. To merit and demerit in the state of fallen nature, freedom from necessity is not required, but freedom from co-action is sufficient."

St. Francis de Sales in his "Treatise on the Love of God," p. 2, b. 4, c. 10, brings out a misconception which it is well to note.

"Make the impossible supposition that there existed an infinite goodness between which and ourselves there is no communion. Surely we would prize it more highly than ourselves, and consequently it could happen that we would cherish a simple desire of loving it. But properly speaking, we would not love it, because love looks to union. Much less would it be in our power to have the love of charity toward it. For charity is a friendship, and friendship must be mutual, as it is founded on communication of good things,

and has union as its end. I say this on account of certain men who feed on chimeras."

As we know, the chimera was a flame-breathing monster with the head of a lion, the body of a goat, and the tail of a serpent. Such a monster and such an idea of love for God are, according to the saint, each of them possible only in the dream of a fevered brain.

And yet, perhaps, some of us, as too literal minded children, may have somehow made to ourselves this absurd image of love for God, and thence despaired of making acts of love.

The following formula of the act of love has often been taught in the catechism class: "O my God, I love Thee above all things with my whole heart and soul *purely* because Thou art infinitely perfect and deserving of all my love." And some have so insisted on the one word *purely* that they thought they were called on to love God without any regard for themselves, and to shut the eyes of their mind to the truth that He is *my* God, *my* Creator, *my* Preserver, *my* Redeemer, *my* Sanctifier, *my* Beatifier, *my* Father, *my* Brother, *my* Friend, whose will I am bound to do, and make my will in order to please Him. My father and mother are not called on to forget that I am their son in order to love me with a love that is pure, and neither am I called on to forget that my parents are my *kin*. And neither am I required, in order to love God purely, to make a supposition which is not only as false and absurd as that two and two are five, but also renders a love of friendship impossible and unthinkable. There is no fault to be found with the formula quoted, but only with our so misunderstanding the word *purely* as to contradict the truth contained in the word "*my*" at the beginning of the prayer. This bewildering fancy would surely make the practice of love, not only hard, but impossible, and it is well to see it ridiculed as a chimera by the saintly Doctor of the Love for God.

Another misconception is brushed aside by Hugo of St. Victor, *On the Sacraments*, book 2, chapter 8. His language is strong, but he is a classic and a privileged character.

"But, perchance, you will be mercenary if you love God and serve Him that you may receive a reward from Him. This is said by certain fools, and such fools, that they do not understand *themselves*. They say, we love God and serve Him, but in order that we may

not be mercenary, we do not seek any reward, we do not seek even God Himself. He will give it, if He wills to do so, but we do not seek it. For we go so far in shaking our hands off from every remuneration, that we do not even seek Him whom we love. For we love with a love which is pure and gratuitous and filial. We seek nothing. Let Him think of it, if He wish to give anything. We require nothing. We love Him, but we do not seek anything. We do not seek Him whom we love. Hear the wise men! We love Him, say they, but we do not seek Him. This is to say, we love Him, but we do not care for Him. A man, would not be willing to be loved by you in this way. If you loved me in such a way that you would not care for me, I would not care to be loved by you.

"How, they say, are we not mercenary, if we love God on account of this; namely, that we may receive a reward from Him? This is not to love gratuitously, nor is this the love of a son, but of a mercenary and slave, who seek a price for their service. Those who say this do not understand the virtue of love. For what is to love but to wish to have the object loved; not another than itself, but itself. This is gratuitous. If you sought another than itself, you would not love gratuitously."

The reason for this sane view of Hugo of St. Victor is, that love for a friend, if it is true friendship, necessarily yearns for the presence and companionship and conversation of its second self. It certainly is not selfishness in the mother to desire to be with her child, to care for it in its pains, to be consoled by its smiles, laughter, and caresses in its health. What wife would care for the love of a husband which would prompt him to say that he did not care to be with her? She would quickly answer such a profession that it contradicts itself, that what it gives with one hand it takes away with the other, and that pure love of friendship necessarily contains the longing to be with a friend. If it is purified from this longing, it is denatured and is not friendship. So that such a far-fetched conception as that described by the great medieval thinker is no difficulty against the practice of love for God as understood by sane philosophy and theology and the Catholic Church.

What is the substance of Quietism? Let us hear Cardinal Billot on Hope, page 381.

"Quietists were thus called from quiet or indifference about our own salvation. They placed the height of Christian perfection in a certain passivism, which excludes all desire of happiness, all activity in doing good works, and even all resistance to temptations, and



even to the most filthy suggestions of the devil. The Semi-Quietists abhorred absolutely the filthy consequences which Molinos and his Quietists deduced from his principle. And yet, to a certain extent, they clung to the same principle. For they taught that there is a state of pure charity and consummate perfection, in which state there is excluded every act having as its motive our own interest, even spiritual. In it there is no place either for fear of eternal punishments or for the desire of heavenly happiness, or for the act of Christian hope founded on this desire."

The following words of St. Paul are for all, even those walking in the highest paths of perfection:

"Let love be without dissimulation. Hating that which is evil, cleaving to that which is good . . . rejoicing in hope." (Rom. xii. 9.)

"Let us who are of the day be sober, having on the breastplate of faith and charity, and for a helmet the *hope* of salvation." (1 Thess. v. 8.)

"For the grace of God, our Saviour hath appeared to *all* men, instructing us that denying ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live soberly, justly and godly in this world, looking for the *blessed hope*, and the coming of the glory of the great God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ." (Tit. ii. 11.)

"Ourselves also who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we, ourselves, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope." (Rom. viii. 23.)

Here the apostle did not consider that by hope he fell away from any height of perfection.

We read in St. Thomas, 2. 2. q. 83, a. 9:

"In the Lord's Prayer not only are there asked all things which we can rightly desire, but also they are asked in the order in which they should be desired, so that this prayer not only instructs us to ask, but also informs or animates our affections" (is the rule of all right intentions).

"Our end is God to whom our affection tends in two ways. In one way as we wish the glory of God. In another way according as we wish for the fruition of the glory of God. The first pertains to the love by which we love God in Himself, and the second to the love by which we love ourselves in God. And thus, there is placed the first petition, hallowed be Thy name, by which we ask the glory of God. And the second is placed, Thy kingdom come, by which we ask to arrive at the glory of His kingdom."

According to the Quietists and Semi-Quietists, it is imperfection to make any of the petitions of the Lord's Prayer,

except "hallowed be Thy name," and "Thy will be done." Their ideas of perfection and imperfection thus, are not those of Our Lord.

Their pure love is Puritanism. It is impossible for man or angel, or God, not to wish for happiness. To teach that we must be indifferent to our own happiness is nonsense. If we know and consider that the possession of God is the only possible way in which we can be completely happy, and if we are positively indifferent to this possession, we sin against hope and also against love for God, as we have seen with Hugo of St. Victor.

Faith is less perfect than hope, and hope less perfect than charity, but hope, as well as faith, is a virtue as long as we are on earth, and have not what we hope for, and should not be called a positive imperfection. Charity seeketh not its own and excludes egotistic, selfish, disorderly desires for our own satisfaction. Charity does not receive knowledge of truth from God as does faith, nor happiness from God as does hope, of itself it receives nothing, but gives itself. It rests in God Himself. But hope should not be called mercenary in the bad sense. It does not subordinate the good of God to our own. It has nothing of the spirit of the base hireling who cares *only* for himself. The Father gave His Son to save us. Why should we not seek to be saved by that Son, and thus conform our will to the Father's?

Hope to obtain pardon for our sins, the assistance of divine grace and life everlasting in the beatific vision of God through the merits of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Redeemer, is so far from positively excluding love of friendship for God, that this hope prepares for this love, as the dawn for the day, or as the blossom for the fruit. This dawn and blossom disappear before the day and fruit in heaven, but not on earth. It awakens and enkindles our souls to love God for His own sake. Faith, Hope, and Charity are not one, but three. Charity is not faith and neither is it hope. Yet, charity as a love of friendship, being mutual, is unthinkable without hope. As St. Thomas ever keeps repeating, "This friendship is founded on God's communication of His own beatitude to us." And in this the Angelic Doctor is followed by all Catholic theologians. This communication is not the reason or

motive finally determining our will to cling to God in love. But it is a necessary condition *without* which such friendly love could not exist, or even be conceived.

Moreover, once love for God has been enthroned in our hearts, this queen of all the virtues commands the presence and special activity of each one of her sister virtues, and every virtue is her sister, and hope is no exception; and the more we love God as a friend, the more we hope for this Friend's presence and generosity. Fathers and mothers labor, and spend themselves for their children, and theirs is certainly pure love. But the purity of their disinterested love is far from being destroyed by their hope for the joy of the long companionship of these children, or by the hope that these objects of their present care and affections will be the future props of the old age of their devoted parents.

The question is asked in the school of theology, whether seeking God as the object of our happiness may not be charity as different from hope. In heaven we see God face to face, and the immediate perception of the Infinite Beauty is the beatific vision, the vision that makes us perfectly happy. Every desire which we there have will be filled by its special object. The place, the company of Our Lord's humanity, of Mary clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and crowned with twelve stars; the company of the angels and the saints, all of them wise and good and beautiful and loving toward us—these and many other circumstances are called the accidental happiness of heaven, as the possession of God in the beatific vision is called the substantial. The question thus means, whether it is only hope, or also charity to seek nothing distinct from God, but God Himself as the object of our happiness?

Glory is defined as great knowledge with praise. If we have the great heavenly knowledge of God, we can not help praising Him unceasingly and giving Him glory. But we may think of this knowledge as filling our souls with joy without thinking of it as giving joy and honor to God. Abstraction is not denial. We thus do not deny that we will praise God; we do not say in our hearts that we do not wish our own knowledge as a means of praising God, but for the moment, we do not think of our knowledge as such a means. We look

at one side of the medal, without at the same time denying that it has another.

When we believe, we do not imply that we do not hope; and when we hope, we do not imply that we do not love; and when we love God as the Source of perfect satisfaction to our soul, we do not imply that we do not love Him for His own sake, for what He is in Himself apart from His being the Source of our perfect happiness.

As was said, abstraction is not denial, and when we shut our eyes and smell the rose's sweetness, we do not deny its beauty of color. Suppose, then, that we think of the beauty of God, and the joy of its possession, and are resolved to keep the commandments so as to obtain this eternal happiness. May this be an act of the virtue of charity as distinct from hope? The Seraphic Patriarch often made the aspiration, "*Deus meus et omnia*"—"My God and my All." St. Paul cherished the desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ. St. Augustine, on the prayer of Moses on the Mount, that he might see God's face, and on the answer of God, "No man can see My face and live," says, that in the place of Moses, he would have replied, "Let me die that I may see Thy face."

In the fifth lesson of the Office of St. Thomas Aquinas we read: "At Naples, while earnestly praying before the crucifix he heard a voice. 'Well hast thou written about Me, Thomas. What reward then shalt thou receive?' To which he replied, 'No other, O Lord, but Thyself!'"

Some theologians before answering make a distinction. They say that there is a love for God of pure benevolence and another of pure concupiscence or self-interest, but that between there is a third love, which is neither the one nor the other of these, but is love of holy familiarity. It is quasi-benevolence and quasi-concupiscence. It is like the love of the mother, who wishes to be *happy* by the presence of her child, well, or ill, because she loves this child for its own sake. It is also similar to the love of a certain great-grandmother. She was asked, what in this world she would like the most? And she answered, she would like to see all her children and all her grandchildren and all her great-grandchildren, all of whom together she counted by many scores; she would like to see these all the time sitting before her, so that she could be feast-

ing her eyes on them. She said this would be her greatest conceivable happiness on earth.

In solving the question stated, many concede that the love of holy familiarity is love of charity or pure friendship for God. And it is hard to see how it is not. For what is the ultimate reason or motive moving the above-mentioned mother and great-grandmother, what is the primary cause determining their will to desire the company of their offspring? Is it not pure or disinterested love for that offspring? If you say no, it is not, but it is their own satisfaction, and that this is self-interest, and that, however, you grant such a mother or great-grandmother in the act of craving for such a pleasure, necessarily loves disinterestedly, you grant all that we ask. For here we are not concerned with speculation, save in so far as it affects practice. And you grant that those who crave such a pleasure for themselves, love with pure love, not only easily and commonly, but also necessarily.

The great majority of Catholic authors deny that love for God, as the object of our perfect happiness, can be the love of charity or friendship. Perhaps their chief reason for the denial is, that else it would be all over with St. Paul's distinction and difference between charity and hope, and if this is love of charity, then there is nothing left to be the love of hope. When we hope for life everlasting, if we reflect, we mean that we hope to possess God as the chief element of our happiness in life everlasting. There, more than here, He is the Giver and Keeper of our life, and His hand holds us up so that we will not fall away from the life of habitual grace and glory, or fall back into our original nothing from whence He drew us. But there, besides, He is the chief object of our intellect, memory, and will, and of each one of their vital acts, and is the Source of our life and is our Life itself. And all Catholic authors grant that the possession of God in heaven is the chief object of our hope, that the things we hope for here in the act of hope are, each one of them, hoped for by us as a means or help to attain this chief object, and that other things which we hope for in heaven besides God are not the substance of heaven, but only its accidental joys.

In charity, we love God good in Himself, because He is good in Himself; in faith we believe God teaching truth chiefly

about Himself; and in hope we rely on God to give happiness chiefly by the possession of Himself. Virtues are theological, because both their motive and matter are God. Hope which does not hope for God, but only for a vague happiness without possessing Him, is not the specific theological virtue of hope, has not God as its chief matter. Hence, it is not without foundation that the large majority of theologians hold that God, as the object of our happiness, is the object of hope, and not of charity. However, many reply that happiness in God has two aspects, and that hope looks at it as arduous, and love views it as it were present, and that this distinction saves the granted difference between the acts of hope and love.

If any one desires to see the full discussion of this question, he is referred to the recent editions of Hurter's "Dogmatic Theology," and of Cardinal Billot's work on the "Virtue of Charity." The eminent Jesuit Cardinal, in his lectures at the Gregorian University of Rome, strenuously opposed the doctrine taught by his venerable brother-Jesuit at the University of Innsbruck. If we were able to cut a question on which these world-renowned scholars differ, still we would not here be called on to do so. Our question is, whether love for God is easy in practice. If Hurter and Ballerini, and Bossuet and others, who claim Sts. Thomas, Bonaventure, and Augustine, and many of the Fathers and many texts of the Scriptures for their side, are right, then love for God as good for us is the same in species or essence as love for God as good in Himself, and he who loves God good for us, makes an act of charity by the fact. Hence, if we accept Father Hurter's doctrine, the act of love manifestly is easy. However, we avow that we prefer the doctrine of Cardinal Billot. It has the number and weight of authorities in its favor. But as far as we have seen, there is no one stronger than Cardinal Billot for our proposition, that acts of pure love are easy for any one resolved to avoid mortal sin. If he were asked: "Does he make an act of love who resolves to avoid mortal sin, because he wishes to obtain the happiness of heaven by the possession of God?" he would answer: "This is not an act of love, but he who makes this act has a strong natural and supernatural propensity to make the true act of love and easily and commonly makes it." So that we are not called on to cut the

speculative question, as the leaders on both sides are with us on *our* question, which is practical.

This position is logically strengthened by reflecting on the above cited cases of Sts. Francis, Thomas, Augustine, and Paul. Do their words express acts of pure love? No, say those who follow the commoner opinion. Are we not certain that each one of those saints at the same time as uttering those words made an act of love in his heart? By all means, would be the unanimous reply. Hence, any Catholic theologian who would say that acts of love are hard for one who efficaciously hopes for God as his happiness, would find himself between the two horns of a dilemma, between the opposing opinions of Hurter and Billot; and whichever horn he prefers, he must grant with each of these that the act of love is easy in practice. Therefore, we must not heed those who would tell us not to look on God as He *is*; and He *is* both good for us to obtain and possess and good in Himself. And love for Him as good for us, and the object of our perfect happiness, prepares, disposes, urges, awakens, inflames us to love Him as good in Himself; and love for Him as good in Himself, not only does not exclude, but even includes love for Him as good for us.

Is God's love for us an adequate reason or motive of true love of charity, or friendship for God? Suppose that we said in our hearts: "O my God, I love Thee above all things with my whole heart and soul because Thou lovest me." Would this be an act of love in the proper sense? Yes, answer the theologians, and their first reason for this answer is that the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers most frequently propose God's love for us as a motive of our love for God.

"I will love Thee, O Lord, my Strength. The Lord is my Firmament, my Refuge, and my Deliverer. *Therefore* will I give glory to Thee, O Lord, among the nations and I will sing a psalm to Thy name." (Ps. xvii. 2, 3, 50.)

"With all thy strength love Him who made thee." (Ecclus. vii. 32.)

"David loved God that made him." (Ecclus. xlvii. 10.)

"Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? Or distress? Or famine? Or nakedness? Or danger? Or persecution? Or the sword? . . . But in all these things we overcome, *because* of Him that hath loved us." (Rom. viii. 35, 37.)

"For the charity of Christ presseth us: judging this, that if one

died for all, then all were dead. And Christ died for all, that they also who live may now not live to themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again." (2 Cor. v. 14, 15.)

"Therefore let us therefore love God *because* God first hath loved us." (1 John iv. 19.)

"Not as though we had loved God, but *because* He hath first loved us." (1 John iv. 10.)

"If even a soul which was torpid, feeling itself loved, is aroused, and if he who was already fervid, by learning that he is loved in return, is more inflamed, it is manifest that there is no greater *cause* of the beginning or increase of love, than the knowledge that we are loved.

"If, therefore, Christ came, above all for this, that man might know how much God loves him, and that he might know in order that he might be inflamed with love for Him, who loved man first, it is manifest that on those two Precepts of love for God and for our neighbor, depend not only all the law and the prophets, but also all the volumes of the divine books which were afterward written and consigned to our memory. Place before yourself this love as the final purpose to which you must refer all that you say while catechizing the ignorant. Whatever you narrate, so narrate it that he to whom you speak, by hearing may believe, by believing may hope, by hoping may love." (St. Augustine on Catechizing the Ignorant, chapter 4.)

"If the worthiness of God is sought, when the *cause* of loving Him is sought, this is His chief worthiness; namely, because He has loved us first. He is manifestly worthy to be loved in return, especially if we consider who has loved and whom and how much." (St. Bernard on loving God, ch. 1.)

All the other saints speak in the same strain; thus, for example, St. Ignatius in his contemplation for obtaining divine love, near the end of his book of the Spiritual Exercises.

We transcribe the following from Pesch, n. 564:

"The benignity of God toward us is nowhere more splendidly, mightily, sweetly manifest than in the incarnation, passion, death of our Saviour.

"When the goodness and kindness of God our Saviour appeared, not by the works of justice which we have done, but according to His mercy, He saved us, by the laver of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Ghost, whom He hath poured forth upon us abundantly, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, that being justified by His grace, we may be heirs, according to hope of life everlasting." (Titus iii. 4-7.)

"Now, since Jesus Christ is true God, when we love Jesus, as He is a divine person, we love God. But to love Jesus, who is so loving, is, indeed, not a difficult thing. This is a most easy way of coming to the attainment of charity; namely, to consider the divine kindness



by which the infinite God was moved, now to lie as a little child in the manger; now to walk about on our earth, loading me with kindnesses, by teaching, consoling, healing; now to hang on a cross and suffer horrid pains and sorrows, and die a most grievous death; and now to arise glorious from the tomb and ascend into heaven for our justification." Thus far Pesch.

"Is it much to pay back by love, which is so great in one so great? Is it much for scanty dust to gather itself up totally, to love in return, when, forsooth, that Divine Majesty is seen preventing this dust in love, and all intent on the work of its salvation? . . . If I owe my whole self for myself made, what can I now add for myself both remade and remade in this manner? He made me so great, and He made me by one word. In remaking me, He said many words, and wrought wondrous works and suffered hard things, and things that were not only hard but indignities. 'What then shall I render to the Lord for all the things that He hath rendered to me?' (Ps. cxv. 12.)

"In the first work He gave me *myself*; in the second, He gave me *Himself*. And when He gave Himself, He restored myself to myself. Therefore, being given and regiven, I owe myself for myself, and I owe myself twice. But what shall I render to God for *Himself*? For though I could pay myself back a thousand times, what am I to God? Here in the first place see with what measure, nay, how without measure, God has merited to be loved by us. He loved us first. He is so great. He loved us so much, He loved us gratuitously without our previous merits. And we are so small and so bad. I will love Thee, O Lord, my Strength, my Firmament, and my Refuge and my Liberator, and, in fine, my—whatever can be said that is desirable and lovable. My God, my Helper, I will love Thee for Thy gifts and according to my own measure. Indeed, it is less than is just, but clearly it is not less than I can. Although I can not love as much as I ought, yet, I can not love more than I can. However, I will be able to love more when Thou wilt deign to give more. Yet, I will never be able to love Thee as much as Thou deservest to be loved." (St. Bernard on loving God, ch. 3.)

The honey-tongued Doctor is here in perfect accord with the Church as she sings on the feast of the Sacred Heart: "Who will not love in return Him who loves us? Who that has been redeemed, will not love?"

The "*O Salutaris Hostia*" is usually sung at the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament in our country. Perhaps, many of our readers have never seen all the words of the Hymn, "*Verbum Supernum*," of which the "*O Salutaris*" is the conclusion. We here transcribe these words in full from the English translation found in the Breviary of the Marquis of Bute:

"The Word of God proceeding forth,  
 Yet leaving not the Father's side,  
 And going to His work on earth,  
 Had reached at length life's eventide.

"By a disciple to be given  
 To rivals for His Blood athirst;  
 Himself, the very Bread of Heaven,  
 He gave to His disciples first.

"He gave Himself in either kind;  
 His Precious Flesh; His Precious Blood.  
 Of flesh and blood is man combined,  
 And He, of man would be the Food.

"In birth man's Fellow-man was He;  
 His meat while sitting at the Board;  
 He died his Ransomer to be;  
 He reigns to be his Great Reward.

"O Saving Victim, slain to bless!  
 Who openest Heaven's bright gates to all!  
 The attacks of many a foe oppress;  
 Give strength in strife, and help in fall.

"To God the Three in One, ascend  
 All thanks and praise for evermore;  
 He grant the life that shall not end,  
 Upon the heavenly country's shore. *Amen.*"

The strophe immediately before that beginning with the words, "*O Salutaris,*" is thus worded in the terse, ringing, happy Latin phrases of the Angel of the Schools:

*"Se nascens dedit socium,  
 Convalescens in edulium  
 Se moriens in pretium,  
 Se regnans dat in præmium."*

Incidentally, we may recall that it is no wonder that the Seraphic Doctor so admired these, and the other verses written at the command of Pope Urban IV for the Office of the Blessed Sacrament by his bosom friend Thomas, that he tore up his own compositions written at the command of the same Pope, lest the Vicar of Christ might err in judgment and taste, and prefer for the Breviary the songs of Bonaventure to those of Thomas.

Many profane critics have placed this strophe above all other sublime verses written by the pen of uninspired man. What great things done by the Son of God out of love for man are here pictured! How this picture moves souls to love for God, the noblest of all emotions! And what music in the words, and how their simplicity rivals even that of the sublime verse of Genesis. "God said, let there be light and immediately light was made."

After this digression on the power of intellect and depth of feeling, and happy words of this greatest of Christian theologians and philosophers, who in these four brief lines, shows he was also one of the greatest of poets, we come back to the question asked above; viz.: Is it an act of love in the proper sense to say, "O my God, I love Thee above all things with my whole heart and soul, because Thou lovest me"? An objection might be made. Charity is love for the Infinite God on account of His *infinite* goodness. But benefits to me are outside of God, are created goodness and not infinite. Hence, as it would seem, love for God on account of these benefits, is not the love of charity or friendship, which loves God for what He is, but the love of gratitude which loves God for what He has done. In our answer, with Father Pesch we follow the great Suarez, called by Pope Benedict XIV the *Doctor Eximius*, and he follows St. Thomas. Gratitude is not friendship. This is manifest and must be granted. But here we look not only at the gifts which though most great, are yet created and finite, but also at the Giver, and the love with which He gives, and this is the chief means by which we know and see and feel that the Giver is infinitely good in Himself.

I can not help asking myself, Why did God so love a vile sinner and enemy like myself, first, and so much? And my ready answer is that He is infinitely good in Himself.

Therefore, in the above act of love, I take the words, "because He loved me first," in their full, and not their narrow sense, and when taken in their full sense, they harmonize the Scriptures and Fathers with the sound theological principle that the love of charity, or friendship, for God is on account of His infinite goodness in itself.

In the act of love which many of us were taught as chil-

dren, we read: "O my God, I love Thee above all things with my whole heart and soul purely because Thou art infinitely perfect and deserving of all my love." Here the term "infinitely perfect" takes in all of the divine essence and attributes. And no Catholic theologian denies that this is a valid act of love. The Venerable Leonard Lessius wrote a great classic work on the "Divine Perfections." He divided his work into fourteen books, and each book treats of a special divine perfection. The following are the titles of the fourteen books: God's Infinity, Immensity, Immutability, Eternity, Omnipotence, Wisdom, Goodness, Sanctity, Benignity or Love, Sovereignty, Providence, Mercy and Patience and Meekness and Clemency, Justice, and, finally, God as the Last End.

Now, the question is asked, whether the act of love would be charity, or love for God in the proper sense, if the motive were any one of these divine perfections, and did not take them all in, as in the above formula. For instance, suppose that I would say, "O my God, I love Thee above all things with my whole heart and soul purely because Thou art infinitely *wise* and deserving of all my love." There have been theologians who held that this is not a true act of charity or love, but they are commonly contradicted, and apparently with good reason. As must be noted, we love the infinite God on account of His infinite wisdom, not on account of wisdom which is not His, or is not infinite; and He is surely worthy of all our love for this infinite perfection. Moreover, as all theologians teach, each divine perfection contains all the others implicitly, and if we gave these experts a hearing, they could, by the use of a little logic, quickly show us how all the divine perfections must exist in Him who has one of them. They tell us that in heaven, when we see God face to face, and know Him as He is, and as He knows us, not as here afar off and through the luminous cloud of reasoning, or faith, but near and by His own light as we now see the sun, then, we will not distinguish between His justice and His mercy, or between any of His attributes. We must beware of fancying that in this, God is like His creatures, in which there may be such a distinction between attributes that we may correctly say, this one is not that one, that they are two, or more, really distinct and different.

But some may press the objection and urge: "Well, granted that it is love for the infinite God on account of an infinite good to love Him for His infinite wisdom, or for any other of His attributes which are absolute, and do not necessarily regard us. Yet, it may not be an act of the virtue of charity to love God on account of a relative attribute, such as His love for us, called His benignity, or for His mercy, or patience, or meekness or clemency." The great number of the theologians do not admit that there is any force in this doubt or objection. The outward effects or works by which God uses or exerts these attributes, are created and finite, but these attributes, though regarding creatures, are intrinsic to the divine nature, and therein are infinite good or perfections, and our act of love, as we have seen, looks at them as they are in the divine nature, or as intrinsic.

If this rather technical explanation does not appeal to certain readers, they may console themselves with the thought that it is not necessary. For where do the theologians who are sound get their radical concept of what the act of the virtue of love, or charity, is? From the Scriptures, as understood by the Fathers. Well, what is the concept of love for God as given us by David in the Psalms; by Ecclesiasticus writing about David; by St. Paul in his Epistles to the Romans and the Corinthians and to Titus; and by the Apostle of love in his Epistle; and by St. Augustine, the most penetrating of the Fathers and Doctors; and by St. Bernard, the last of the Fathers and the honey-tongued Doctor of the Church; and by St. Thomas, the Angel of the Schools; and by Suarez, his great disciple and expounder?

This concept is of one loving God *because* He loved us first, and so much. Theologians should harmonize their concepts of the love for God with the Scriptures and Fathers and Doctors. Thus only are they scientific. These are the sources. Theologians are to explain them, but not explain them away. And the opinion that love because God loved us first and so much is not true love, or charity, seems to explain away the cited texts of the Scriptures and Fathers and Doctors.

This effort to make love for God something hard in practice appears to us unworthy of being seriously considered.

## CHAPTER VII

*THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND HIS GOODNESS,  
REQUIRED IN ORDER TO LOVE HIM, IS EASY FOR  
THE CATHOLIC AND HARD OR IMPOSSIBLE FOR  
ONE WHO FOLLOWS A NON-CATHOLIC RULE  
OF FAITH AND IS THOUGHTFUL*

**L**OVE of God is necessarily hard for one who is carried about like a little child by every wind of doctrine, and has only a scanty, vague, or uncertain knowledge of the goodness of God, our Creator and Father; of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Brother; of the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier and Spouse of our souls; and of their generous deeds and promises.

Now, one of the essential teachings of every denomination of non-Catholic Christianity is, that the rule of faith is not the infallible authority of the living Church, but each individual's own private judgment, or private inspiration. Of old, many found it too much to believe that what had always and everywhere been held by all Christians in a matter pertaining to faith or morals, is certainly what the apostles received from the Holy Spirit, or Our Lord; and too much to believe that the one visible head of the One Church of Christ can always be assisted by Providence to avoid error in teaching the whole Church that this or that is Christian truth. And of old, many of these same orthodox Protestants claimed that each individual Christian, by the use of his private judgment alone, or by the use of this private judgment and the supernatural lights given him immediately by God, would interpret the Bible with truth and certainty, or was infallible. They rejected one infallible head and accepted millions of infallible members, although these were all cut off from the head, and some believed and taught things contradicted by many others equally infallible.

But now the many among non-Catholics have begun to think for themselves, and they see clearly that this rule of private judgment is not practical, does not work, is not prag-

matic, and can not give certainty, or anything like it. For here there is question of matters difficult in themselves. Many of them are mysteries, which we could not know without God's own supernatural revelation. These supernatural truths are altogether different from the natural truths which we know by our reason.

In each man, we see a body and a soul, two substances, and one personality. Peter, James, and John are three persons, three distinct and different, intelligent, free, responsible principles of their own respective actions, and each has his own soul and body, his own two substances.

How different from what we thus see around us in men, is the Blessed Trinity. We are taught by faith that in it there are *three* Persons in *one* substance, the opposite of what we see in each man with the use of our reason and eyes. Without accepting the Trinity, the most fundamental of all Christian truths, we can not believe in the Incarnation; the virgin birth of the Son of God conceived by the Holy Ghost; the Atonement; the Redemption; the condign merits of our Divine Lord, Jesus Christ; on which are founded our acts of hope and love. And how different, again, is all this series of supernatural wonders from what we see around us.

And if we accept the words of Our Lord on the Eucharist, in the sense in which they were taken by the apostles and the Church—the only sense in which Our Lord could expect them to be taken—our sight, taste, touch (if we leave out our hearing of Our Lord's teaching), would incline us to expect the opposite of what the Son of God said—the opposite of the Truth's own word, "This is My body. This is My blood."

And then again there are those plain words spoken by Our Lord, when He had said to the apostles, "Peace be to you," and had breathed upon them, and had said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," those plain words, "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." How strange that a man, even as a deputy of God, should be a judge in the matter of sins, offenses not of man but of Divine Majesty, and should have power to give or refuse pardon for them!

How strange, again, that not only the apostles, bishops, or priests, but any one with the use of reason and with the inten-

tion of doing what the Church or Christians do, should receive power to pour or sprinkle a little water and pronounce a few words and thus regenerate a soul, confer habitual sanctifying grace that blots out original and actual sin, and all debt of eternal and temporal punishments, and that makes out of a son of Adam and of wrath, an adopted son and friend and heir of God, co-heir with Jesus Christ. And this tremendous power is given to any one, even though he be an atheist and a criminal! "Peter baptizeth, it is Christ that baptizeth; Paul baptizeth, it is Christ that baptizeth; Judas baptizeth, it is still Christ that baptizeth." This is the time-honored maxim of the Church as expressed in the ringing words of St. Augustine. Even the thief and traitor and deicide could act validly as the deputy, agent, minister, moral instrument of Christ, the principal meritorious and efficient cause of the Baptism, which is not only in water, but also in the word, and even in the Holy Ghost and in fire. What a puzzle this was, even to a Cyprian, the learned, eloquent, zealous bishop and martyr! How hard, if not impossible, to solve this question from the Scriptures alone! Their words are so brief, and often so obscure on the matter, form, minister, subject, intentions, dispositions, required for the validity of each one of the sacraments, and not only of Baptism, the first and most necessary of them all. What practical points and what numbers have fallen into errors on all of them! How learned and sincere, like Cyprian, were many of those who erred! Yet all had the Scriptures under their eyes.

Of what difficult themes St. Paul treats! How incomplete is our knowledge of the circumstances that occasioned his fragmentary statements of doctrines in his Epistles! How different from ours are his choice of figures and construction of sentences and paragraphs, and lightning rapidity of reasonings, and strange admixture of Greek and Hebrew phraseology and idioms! How many passages in his Epistles were hard to be understood, even by those of his own day and tongue, to whom he addressed them! St. Peter had to set them right on the words of Our Lord and of St. Paul regarding the proximity of the day of judgment. After explaining the truth fully, he adds:



“Account the long suffering of Our Lord salvation, as also our most dear brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, hath written to you. As also in all his Epistles speaking in them of these things, in which *are certain things hard to be understood*, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.” (2 Peter iii. 15, 16.)

At present we may often hear some of the following professions of belief, or unbelief, not only in the classrooms of universities, but even on the railway coaches and on steamers, and on street corners among heated disputants:

“I believe that there is one God, and that Jesus Christ was a good man, but not God. I believe in nothing but the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. I believe only in creation and the ten commandments. I believe in evolution, but not in creation. I believe in the morality of the New Testament, but in nothing miraculous, or in any way supernatural. I believe in morality, but only in morality without God. I believe in natural right, but not in natural law, which implies a Divine Law-giver. I believe in ethical culture without dogma, either theological or philosophical, without the supposition of the knowledge of any truth by means of either supernatural revelation or natural reason. No one can know anything as it is, any truth, we can know only phenomena and not noumena, only appearances and our experiences, and not realities. Who knows but twice two may make five among the inhabitants of Mars? I believe in the materialistic interpretation of history, that men have invented religious beliefs and moral codes, according to the money interests of the dominant classes of the times.”

Does not the mere existence of these discrepancies manifest that there are difficulties for the human mind in the very matters on which men thus differ?

But why blame the interpretation of the Bible by private judgment alone for these errors? Because this rule of faith or belief deserves this blame. Agnosticism, universal doubt, absolute skepticism, is the natural tendency of this principle and method.

As a Catholic, I believe in the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, indefectible, infallible Church. For me, every book and each part of each book of the Holy Scriptures is the word of God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. The Holy

Spirit revealed to the blessed apostles what books are inspired. The inspired apostles told the Church what books are inspired. They did not write down either this salutary truth, or many another, which they were inspired to teach the Church. It may have been written down afterward by others, or may have been acted on in practice by the pastors and the faithful. Or it may have been otherwise consigned to memory, or handed down to us from generation to generation. But it was not written down in the beginning, and it was taught to the apostles immediately, either by Our Lord, or the Holy Spirit. It is a *Divine Tradition*. The Church was commissioned and aided by Our Lord to preserve the word of God, written and unwritten. She knows what books are inspired, and I know that she knows this, and when she tells me that the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the Acts of Luke, and the Epistles of Paul and James and Peter and John and Jude, and the Apocalypse of John, that each of these is inspired, I easily render a reasonable homage to her teaching authority, and I easily believe these facts on the very word of God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived.

She may then tell me what is the meaning of this or that part of the written or unwritten word of God, and I easily believe it, and my proximate rule or reason of belief is that the Church teaches it. She gives me the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Profession of Faith of Pius IV. or Pius X. And whether I am a learned judge like Blessed Thomas More, or a genius and a saint and a Father and a Doctor of the Church like St. Augustine, or a saintly king and soldier like St. Louis, or a scientist like Pasteur, or a busy man of the world, or a horny-handed laborer, all of us have had the same proximate easy reason for believing in the Gospels and the Creeds, and it is that the Church teaches us. And thus we all learn divine truth easily, securely, and without any admixture of error.

How different the method of private judgment or private inspiration! The reformers taught that all churches can err, and all have erred, and that the Catholic Church can err, and has erred. They had to hold this to justify their revolt from her teaching authority. Moreover, they denied the existence of any Divine Traditions.

Furthermore, Luther denied *the power of natural reason to know any religious or moral truth, whatsoever, without the aid of supernatural revelation, and of faith in it.*

Ask a genius like Augustine, or Aquinas, or Newman why he believes that Jesus is God, and unspeakably good, and he will answer:

“My belief in this is a reasonable homage. My natural reason tells me that there is a God, and that if He speaks for me, it is reasonable for me to believe that what He says is true. And my infallible Church, which exists from the days of Christ and the apostles, learned by unwritten Divine Traditions from the inspired apostles that John, for example, was inspired to write that Jesus is God and unspeakably good. I thus know by the use of my natural reason, and of the supernatural light of revelation and faith, that Jesus is God and good. Here there is no flaw or missing link in the chain of lights giving me the knowledge that Jesus is God and good.”

The orthodox Protestant, if faithful to the principles of original Protestantism, must say:

“I have no regard for the dictates of reason, or of a teaching Church, or of a Divine Tradition. I believe in the Bible, and nothing but the Bible, and I rely only on my own private judgment to learn what is the Bible as inspired and what is the meaning of the verses or chapters of the Bible.” How many necessary links are here missing from the chain of witnesses to the truth that God revealed to us that Jesus is God and good!

Milner, Wiseman, Newman, Gibbons and other standard popular writers on the rule of faith, are in accord with Bellarmine, in bringing out, that, with the exclusion of the authority of the Church and of Divine Traditions, there can be no divine faith in the Gospels as the word of God, or in the meaning of the truths taught in the Gospels. But they have not urged that the Lutheran denial of the powers of natural reason to know some elementary religious and moral truths, makes another break in the chain of our knowledge, and plays havoc with the faith of every Christian who is also philosophic, scientific, critical, or thoughtful. Catholic apologists all know of this weak point in the Lutheran or Protestant rule of faith, but they have not insisted on it as

far as we understand and remember. And anyhow, they have not insisted on it as bearing on the question whether it is easy to love God because He is good.

Therefore, we will now insist, at some length, that one great cause of acts of love being hard in practice and rare in fact, is found in this Lutheran and Protestant tenet.

In the beginning this tenet was widespread, and later it was disavowed. But there is a strong leaning toward it still among many non-Catholics, and we will now hear it openly proclaimed in its original simon-pure form by many occupants of Christian pulpits in our own day. Thus, this point is here treated, not as a matter of mere erudition regarding the history of Luther and Lutheranism or Protestantism, and as a dead issue of the past; but as a cause which has influenced many, even within the pale of the Church, to look on God and His goodness as objects hard to know well enough to love with our whole heart.

Therefore, we now ask, was it the teaching of Luther, Melancthon, and other reformers, and is it still the teaching of many non-Catholic Christians, that our natural reason can not know even the first principles of religion and morality?

We read the following words of Luther, cited by Janssen in the "History of the German People," Vol. xic, page 120:

"Man's reason is, perhaps, adequate for knowing how to build houses, make clothes, marry, fight, navigate, etc., but in things divine, in things concerning God, to know how to act, so as to please God and obtain salvation, in this respect, human nature is altogether dense, dull, and blind, and can not show even so much as a hair's breadth of what these things are. Presumptuous enough, indeed, she is to go floundering and blundering in, like a blind horse. But all that she has to say on the subject is as certainly false and erroneous as it is certain that God exists. She does not even rightly recognize and understand moral truths, even such as man's nature is, so to say, born to, as, for instance, what you do not wish to be done to you, that do not do to others."

Luther here openly contradicts himself. In one breath he says that reason does not even rightly recognize and understand primary moral truths. And in the next breath he says that man's nature was *born* to these primary moral truths. We note this phrase: "Man's nature was born to these truths." If this phrase means anything, it means that natural reason

without supernatural revelation *does* easily rightly recognize and understand the primary moral truths. And manifestly, this proposition is the direct and immediate contradictory of Luther's previous statement, that reason *does not* rightly recognize and understand primary moral truths. Some may ask, How can Luther be said to deny the power of reason, when he explicitly affirms this power? We answer that it is a historic fact that Luther explicitly and emphatically denies, and that this denial is the paramount purpose in the passage cited. The *obiter dicta* of a judicial opinion may contradict the substance of the same opinion, but they do not show that the judge did not give forth that substance. We will realize as we proceed, that in Luther's mind, the denial of the powers of reason was the paramount purport of his teaching. If the above question means, How could Luther be so illogical? That is a question to be answered not by us, but by Luther and his followers in this matter.

As Janssen narrates, Luther had some years before taught the error that some things are true in philosophy and false in theology, or true in theology and false in philosophy. He had imbibed this error from Italian humanists. He was condemned for it by the Paris Sorbonne.

The following words from Döllinger are cited by Janssen on page 123, Vol. xiv:

"The reason why Luther was so fiercely opposed to human reason, and to the study of philosophy, is easily explained by the fact that he had a distinct feeling, and a certain intuitive sense, that his doctrine on God, as the author of sin and on man as naturally unfree, was condemned by philosophy as the most arrant falsehood."

On page 125, Vol. xiv, Janssen cites the following passage from Moehler:

"So long as the teaching of Luther and Calvin was believed to be true, there was no poetry, no history, no philosophy, etc., in the Protestant church. It was, indeed, a positive fact, that so long as the Protestant community remained Lutheran, it had no philosophy, and when it acquired a system of philosophy, it was no longer Lutheran. Such is the way in which their faith flies from philosophy, and their philosophy from faith."

Überweg, late professor of philosophy in the University of Königsberg, and successor there to the chair of Immanuel

Kant, confirms the testimonies of Janssen, Döllinger and Moehler under the titles "Protestantism" and "Philosophy" on page 15, Vol. II, of his "History of Philosophy."

"The religious conviction of the individual was found to be rather prejudiced than confirmed by the reasoning of the schools. It was found that not work prescribed by the Church, but personal faith alone, possessed beatifying virtue. *Human reason was believed to conflict with that faith which the Holy Ghost produces. . . .* The logical consequence of these conceptions would have been the annihilation of all philosophy in favor of immediate unquestioning faith."

Luther, Melancthon, and the other original reformers were thus only consistent in the stand which they took against all university education. That this stand was a fact is almost incredible to many of our readers. How often it is dinned into our ears, that before the Reformation there was no university education worthy of the name, that the medieval world had been intellectual chaos, void and dark, until the Reformation said, "Let there be light," and immediately light was made throughout a previously benighted world. The authors of this assertion claim not only talent, but intellectual training for Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, etc. And the writings of these reformers and others are in themselves objective proofs of such intellectual training, and they are also objective proofs that intellectual training existed before the Reformation, and was then to be had in the universities. Else, how could these able writers have had it? To what other cause can we attribute this effect? So that he who asserts the ability of these reformers, and also asserts that there was no university education worthy of the name before they initiated it, palpably contradicts himself.

But let us return to the fact that the reformers took a stand utterly hostile to all university education.

We read in Janssen, Vol. III, page 355:

"Luther had denounced the universities as dens of murderers, temples of Moloch, synagogues of corruption. In a sermon preached in the year 1521, of which several editions were published, he had actually gone so far as to say that the universities were only worthy of being reduced to dust, and that nothing more hellish or devilish had ever appeared on the earth from the beginning of things, or ever would appear. Melancthon also said, in a pamphlet against Emser, in the year 1521: 'Never had anything more corrupt, or godless, been

invented than the universities. Not the Popes, but the devil himself was their originator. Wickliffe had been the first to recognize that the universities were schools of Satan. Could he have said anything more wise or godly? The Jews offered up youths to Moloch. And at the universities, young men were offered up to pagan idols. A man who boasts of the title of a philosopher can not be called a Christian.'"

Janssen afterward tells of Melancthon's change of front and of his even adopting, as a necessity, the logic and philosophy of Aristotle, which Luther, as is well known, had burned in public, together with the Canon Law, which is based on Roman Law, which was called "Written Reason." Überweg also notes this change. But Janssen shows from the succeeding phases of Protestant philosophy how it was ever uphill work on account of the original tenets of Calvin and Luther.

How these tenets, so hostile to the universities and their studies, were translated into action, is strikingly illustrated by the following series of statistics, showing the general decline of the numbers of students in the German universities at that period. They are taken from Janssen, Vol. III, page 358 sq. The first figures give the dates, and the last, the numbers of students who matriculated at these dates:

<i>Erfurt</i>	1520-1521,	311
	1521-1522,	120
	1522-1523,	72
	1523-1524,	34
At Rostock the number had been about		
300.	1524,	38
	1525,	15
Basle	1522,	29
	1526,	5
Heidelberg	1525,	more professors than students.

The University of Vienna under the Emperor Maximilian had had hundreds of professors, and about 7000 students. In 1517 only 667 matriculated, in 1520 only 569. After 1522 there was a rapid decline. The Acts of the University say that, "this was chiefly because at that time the Lutheran sect was dissuading very many from receiving degrees." The times were disturbed and bad for peaceful pursuits of all

kinds. Previously the numbers had been largely swollen by candidates for orders. However, it remains that a great cause of the decline of the numbers of students of classics and philosophy was the hostile preaching of the leaders of the Reformation, and their fundamental principle that we can know little or nothing about God from pure reason, without revelation.

But is not all this mere ancient history and dead theory? Do Protestant ministers of our day follow this gospel of Luther and Calvin? The liberal, non-dogmatic, or unorthodox school lays down as a fundamental principle that we can know very little, if anything, about either natural or supernatural truths pertaining to God and morals, whether by revelation and faith, or by the natural powers of reason. As Harnack and Janssen and Denifle and Grisar all agree, Luther had a dual definition and idea of faith. According to him, the faith that justifies is absolute subjective confidence that the merits of Christ are extrinsically imputed to me, and that my sins are covered over by this imputation, and that I am thus justified by this faith alone, without any good works. This is largely sentimental, if not pure sentiment. However, even this subjectivism, according to Luther's mind, supposed a firm assent of the intelligence to truths revealed by God, on account of the authority of God revealing. He favored the severest measures against any one who attacked any Article of the Apostles' Creed, and demanded that such a one be dealt with as a public blasphemer. And all know the action of Calvin against Servetus for denying the Divinity of Christ. They both believed in intellectual or objective faith. Here the liberal or undogmatic school parts company with Luther and Calvin, and would have been liable to the fate of Servetus at Geneva, in the good old times.

Luther and Calvin and all the first reformers held the incapacity of reason to know anything about God or morals as a *sequence* from their conception of original sin. The liberal school denies original sin, and yet it agrees with these orthodox Protestants in the tenet, that human reason can not know much, if anything, for certain, about God.

Therefore, the liberal school manifestly makes it hard or impossible to love God.



Many of them, alas! go so far as to teach that God is the same, or almost the same as Nature, Humanity, or something else which is not an intelligent free substance, distinct from the world, from all finite things visible or invisible. They deny that God is a personal God in the proper sense. The love of friendship can exist, or be conceived only between two persons, who are persons in the proper sense. They would thus make our love of friendship for God not only hard or impossible, but even inconceivable. So much for the present for the liberal school of ministers.

Many of the orthodox still cling to the old-fashioned Lutheran idea of original sin, and consistently deduce from this idea that human reason can know nothing of God, or the things of God. We said many, and not all. We find no trace of any remnant of this Lutheran idea in those works of the late Canon Liddon which we have read. Several of his books are known to have been placed by Catholic professors of theology in the hands of all the students of a seminary. Not to speak of his vindication of the Divinity of Our Lord in his masterpiece on that subject, or of his scholarly defense of many of the prerogatives of Our Lady, in his sweet booklet on the Magnificat, we note his commentary on the parts of the Epistles to the Romans, where St. Paul emphasized the power of natural reason to derive from our knowledge of the things which we see with our eyes the intellectual knowledge of the invisible God and of His majesty, and of our duty to obey, thank, and glorify Him, and of the fundamental maxims of His moral law indelibly engraven by Him on every human heart or intelligence. Many parts of this commentary might almost have been written by St. Thomas Aquinas. Not only the matter or doctrine, but also the method is similar to that of the Angel of the Schools. Here we find words precisely defined; ideas distinguished from ideas by exhaustive divisions according to genus, species, and difference; arguments stated in bald terms, stripped of verbiage and rhetorical figures. Here the reader's mind can see for itself what are the premises and what are the major and minor and middle terms in these premises, and what is the conclusion following from these premises, and what is the logical connection between this conclusion and these premises.

Certainly, Canon Liddon's natural reason fully grasped valid motives for assenting to the truth that there is a God, and to the truth that there is a duty in us to believe what God may reveal on account of the authority of God revealing. The operations of his mind, here laid bare, are, indeed, an object lesson of the power of natural reason to know some things about God and morality. And as the late Father Henry Van Rensselaer often loved to testify, Liddon, in his day and after, had a large following among the Protestant clergy. They regarded the Canon as a ripe scholar and almost an oracle, and as a leader who was truly sane and safe. But on matters concerning Our Lord and God, and the Trinity, and the moral law, as it seems to us, he followed the Catholic rule of faith, at least to a great extent. He did not reject the existence of Divine Traditions, or the authority of the Church in the first Ecumenical Councils. For him the consensus of the Fathers on the Canon and on the interpretation of a passage of the Scriptures had, at least, great weight. Above all, he did not reject the power of natural reason to know without the aid of revelation, rudimentary truths on God, the soul and morality.

He, and his school do not justly fall under the following indictment of the late William James, in "Pragmatism," page 17.

"Religious philosophy in our day and generation is among us, English reading people, of two main types. One of these is more radical and aggressive, the other has more the air of fighting a slow retreat. By the more radical wing of religious philosophy, I mean, the so-called transcendental idealism of the Anglo-Hegelian school, the philosophy of such men as Green, the Cairds, Bosanquet, and Royce. This philosophy has greatly influenced the more studious members of our Protestant ministry. It is pantheistic, and has already blunted the edge of the traditional theism in Protestantism at large. That theism remains, however. It is the lineal descendant through one stage of concession after another of the dogmatic scholastic theism still taught rigorously in the seminaries of the Catholic Church."

We accept the statement that the professors in our seminaries still rigorously teach as a dogma, or known truth, theism, or the doctrine that there is one Personal God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. We also accept the implications in the words *scholastic* and *traditional*; namely, that this doc-

trine is ever the same, and has suffered no change from the days of the scholastics of the great thirteenth century, or of the Fathers before, who were witnesses to the teaching of the Church in their day, and to that of the apostles and Our Lord, and the patriarchs and prophets. But we protest against the insinuation in the words, "this philosophy has greatly influenced the *more studious* members of the Protestant ministry." Liddon and those of his class *are the more studious* members of the Protestant ministry. And these have not been in any way tainted with pantheism or idealism, and its doubts about the powers of reason to know rudiments regarding God and things religious or moral.

On page 19 of the same book Mr. James has these words:

"If you are the lovers of facts I have supposed you to be, you find the trail of the serpent of rationalism, of intellectualism over everything that lies on that side of the line."

*That side* here is the school which clings to traditional dogmatic scholastic theism and rejects idealism, or the doctrine that the human race know nothing as it really is, and is incapable of thus knowing. We do not stop to ask him how he can logically say this, and at the same time say that *he* knows the truth of this, his assertion, or why, when maintaining that the human race, being always rationalist and intellectualist, has always erred on things of the most practical importance and necessity, he assumes the lofty tone of Caiphas, who being pontiff for that year, said "*You know nothing.*"—"*Vos nescitis quidquam.*" We call the attention of the reader to the fact that he characterizes our teaching that we can and do know that there is a personal God, as rationalism, intellectualism. He is not alone in thus characterizing it. He follows the fashion set, for example, by Paulsen of Berlin, whose book on philosophy is prefaced and commended by Mr. James. Mr. James gave his lectures on pragmatism in January, 1907, at Columbia University, New York, as he tells us in his preface. In 1906 Paulsen and Marvin on the "Introduction to Philosophy," and Weber on the "History of Philosophy," were the chief books placed in the hands of the girls of Barnard, in the senior class. Each of these authors is in harmony with Mr. James in crying out against rationalism, intellectualism.

"Ism" means to them a false claim for the powers of reason or intellect. It asserts that our reason or intellect can not know any thing as it is, and in particular that they can not know as objective truth that there is one personal God.

It is not alien to the subject or scope of this paragraph to call special attention to the "History of Philosophy," by Alfred Weber, Professor in the University of Strasburg.—Authorized Translation by Frank Thilly, A.M., Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy in the University of Missouri." We read on page 244:

"St. Thomas of Aquin. The demonstration of the existence of God is the first and principal task of philosophy. Philosophy could not, however, perform this task, or even have a conception of God, had not the Creator first revealed Himself to man in Jesus Christ."

Such is the doctrine attributed to St. Thomas by Dr. Weber. However, in the third chapter of the very introduction or præmium to the "*Summa Philosophica*," or the "Truth of Catholic Faith Against the Gentiles," we read:

"In the things which we confess concerning God, there are two kinds of truths. For there are some things true concerning God which exceed every faculty of human reason, as, that God is Three in One. But there are some things which natural reason can attain, as for example, that God exists, there is only one God, and other things of this kind. These things even the philosophers have proved demonstratively, led by the light of natural reason."

If we take up the "*Summa Theologica*," in Article 2, of question 2, or on the thirteenth page of the first volume of our edition in six volumes, we read the question, "Whether it is demonstrable that God exists?" The brief footnote of the editor says: "From this article you have the means of refuting by reason the error of those, who say (as St. Thomas reports in Book I, chapter 12, Against the Gentiles) that the existence of God can not be demonstrated *à posteriori*."

In this article the Holy Doctor follows his usual method and first objects:

"It seems that it is not demonstrable that God exists," and he states three sophistical reasons for this doubt. However, he finally says: "But contrary to all this is, what the Apostle says, 'The invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.' (Rom. i. 20.) But this would not be so, unless from the things that are made, it could be demonstrated that God exists.

For the first thing that must be understood about anything is whether it exists. Conclusion. Although it can not be demonstrated *à priori* that God exists, yet it can be *à posteriori*, from some effects of His which are more known to us."

And in the body of this same article, the Angelic Doctor states his *five* demonstrations for the existence of God, and each is drawn from natural reason. We leave to others to explain, how it was possible for Professors Weber and Thilly to make such a blunder about the fact that St. Thomas holds that reason can know God.

Among the more conservative philosophers who are fighting a slow retreat, William James mentions, on page 18, of "Pragmatism," Professor Borden Bowne.

We submit the following extracts from "Philosophy of Theism," by Borden P. Bowne, Professor in Philosophy in Boston University:

Preface—page i

"Kant pointed out that the ontological argument properly proves nothing, and that the cosmological and the design argument depend on the ontological. The argument, then, is not demonstrative, and rests finally on the *assumed existence* of a perfect being. In a different form I have maintained the same position, but so far from concluding that theistic *faith* is baseless, I have sought to show that essentially the same postulate underlies our entire mental life. There is an element of *faith* and *volition* latent in *all our theorizing*. Where we can not prove, *we believe*. Where we can not demonstrate, *we choose sides*. This element of *faith can not be escaped in any field of thought, and without it the mind is helpless and dumb.*"

Introduction—page i

(These are the very first words of the book)

"I. MAN is religious. However it came about, our race, at least as soon as it emerged from brutishness, possessed religious ideas and impulses."

If we remember aright, Professor Bowne, who died only a short while ago, had been prosecuted for heresy by his Methodist brethren, but could not be convicted. What we wish to call attention to is that this professor in a Methodist college wrote a book to uphold theism, or that there is one personal God. Yet, on the first page of the preface, he asserts that we can not really prove, or even truly know from reason, that there is a God, and can not truly know any other truth. And on the first page, and in the first paragraph of the body

of the book, he rather openly denies the creation of Adam and Eve as narrated by Genesis, and asserts that our race originally emerged from brutishness. Whence, we are not stretching his words when we conclude that, according to him and his theory of progress, our race has arisen from brutishness, and has not fallen from grace and innocence and integrity and immortality through Adam; and that there has been no need of its redemption, and of its rise from sin and death through Christ. We observe also that he follows the well-known maxim of Herbert Spencer, that at the bottom of all our knowledge there lies a supposition of some proposition or judgment which can not be either proved or analyzed. We find this endorsement of the dictum of Spencer in the "Program of Modernism," which was gotten up as a reply to Pius X, and to his condemnation of Modernism in the Encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*. This dictum, if accepted, annihilates not only all faith, but also all knowledge. According to it, it is wrong to regard as a source of certitude either my consciousness of my own thoughts or feelings, or my perception of outward objects by my senses, or my intuition of self-evident truths like "the whole is equal to the sum of its parts and greater than any of its parts"; "every effect has a proportionate cause, etc.," or my deduction of other truths from those that are self-evident, or the testimony of eye-witnesses to facts which I have not perceived myself, or the testimony of experts to truths which I have not worked out myself. According to them, it is still more unreasonable for me to judge that there are valid grounds for my assenting to the truths, "God exists; my soul exists, has understanding, and free will; and if God speaks to teach or guide me, it is reasonable and a duty for me to believe and obey Him; or it is a fact that God has thus spoken."

In Marvin's "Introduction to Philosophy," we read the following on pages 261-262:

"But how are we to picture this *universal substance* as distinct from its manifestations? This question was brought up before, but we could not answer it completely until we had decided how many substances there are in the world. What do we mean by the absolute permanence back of all change? What is substance? If we have to exclude the changing, or that which comes and goes, what is there left? Clearly the permanent laws or uniformities, in accord-

ance with which the changes take place, or, as they are technically expressed, the uniformities of co-existence and sequence among the changing elements. They are the laws of the world's manifestations. These *laws* are the permanent or substantial element in a world of unceasing change, and they form a complete unitary system. The complete *causal nexus* that binds together every part and element of the universe, this is substance."

Here, as we see, there is in the world *one universal substance*. He states this, and he explains, or attempts to explain, what it is, and his explanation emphasizes his statement that there is one only substance. This is pantheism. Mr. Marvin may be a believing and God-fearing Christian man, for aught we know, but his book teaches rank pantheism or atheism, and that explicitly.

The following are the concluding words of the above mentioned book of Doctor Weber :

"Thus, freed from the wholly accidental and passing alliance formed with the passivism of Schopenhauer's system, the *monism* of the will is the synthesis toward which the three factors, as we have seen, co-operate in the development of European philosophy, and are tending. These factors are: reason, which *postulates* the essential *unity of things* (Parmenides, Plotinus, Spinoza); experience, which reveals the universality of struggle, effort, will (Heraclitus, Leibnitz, Schelling); and conscience, which *affirms* the moral ideal, the ultimate end of the creative effort and *universal becoming* (Plato, Kant, Fichte). Nature is an evolution, of which infinite Perfection is both the motive force and highest goal (Aristotle, Descartes, Hegel)."

Is this an accurate summary of the history of modern European philosophy? As we have seen, Doctor Weber is inaccurate and untrustworthy on the history of the philosophy of St. Thomas. And we do not trust him implicitly in his statement of other facts of history, which are harder for him to know, or for us to verify. But we pass this question by. We observe that he uses the phrase "reason postulates." He is thus in harmony with Borden Bowne and Herbert Spencer, and other idealists or sceptics or agnostics, who assert that reason does not see or prove any objective truth, or anything at all, as it is in reality. He would thus call St. Thomas and all Catholics, and all the human race, "intellectualists, rationalists."

We have italicized his terms, "*monism of the will*," "*essential unity of things, universal becoming*." We note the names, Spinoza, Schelling, Hegel, and Fichte, placed by him at the end of each series to cap his fourfold climax. We then go back to page 17 of "Pragmatism," of William James, the quasi-colleague of Doctor Weber, in Columbia University. We there note the words:

"By the more radical wing of religious philosophy I mean the so-called transcendental idealism of the Anglo-Hegelian school. . . . It is pantheistic, and has already blunted the edge of the traditional theism in Protestantism at large."

The pantheistic terms and names here inserted by Doctor Weber, manifest that he regards what he thinks to be present-day European philosophy, as not only idealistic, or agnostic, but also pantheistic, which is the same as atheistic.

But what about the orthodox Protestant ministers of our day, and their position as to the possibility of human reason knowing God and things religious or moral? By the orthodox we mean those who do not make it their paramount aim to conciliate Christian truths with pretended modern science—with suppositions, or hypotheses, which all true scientists say have not been proved and can not ever be proved—by adopting liberal non-dogmatic Protestantism. In this sense, the Roman Catholic and the schismatic Greek Churches are the most orthodox of all Christian denominations. They are not only the most numerous in their membership, and the most historic in their origin and continuity as organizations, but they also hold on to a greater number of articles of faith, of dogmas or known truths, whether revealed or unrevealed, and they hold on to these truths faster and with firmer faith. As a class, the Roman Catholic priests devote more time (and under a more rigid discipline which secures more application) to the study of truth about God and things of God. Pius X is seeing to it that no one, anywhere in the world, shall be ordained to the priesthood and exercise its functions until he has passed through the full curriculum of at least two years of philosophy and four of theology. Thus it is passing strange that writers ignore the Roman Catholic and Schismatic Greek or self-styled Orthodox Church, when there is a question of the tenets of *the* Orthodox Christian Church. That many



writers do thus ignore almost as barbarians all the Greeks and Romans of the Christian world, is a fact which we will now see between the lines of the following citation. But this remark is made only incidentally.

Above, we have seen the position of Lutheran and Calvinistic theology among the first reformers on the incapacity of natural reason—or of philosophy, which is natural reason reflecting and going as far as it can—with regard to the knowledge of God and things divine, whether religious or moral.

Perhaps our readers recall the series of articles published in the year 1909, in the "Cosmopolitan Magazine," by Mr. Harold Bolce, under the general title "Blasting at the Rock of Ages." In the September number there was an article by Mr. Bolce under the special title, "Rallying Around the Cross." The editor's headnote says that this article is the answer of *the* Orthodox Church to the contemporary teaching of the higher institutions of learning. On page 495, Mr. Bolce, with fairness, as it seems to us, resumes the teaching of those ministers whom he had interviewed and whose tenets he had alleged. The following are his words:

"*The Orthodox Church teaches now, as it always has taught, that when man fell in Eden, his intellect fell with him; consequently the mind thinks with the weight of intellectual depravity bearing it down. Salvation has nothing to do with thought. . . . Christ eliminated from the spiritual life all rational organs of perception, when He said, 'Ye must be born again.'* Orthodoxy starts with man as it finds him, in a lost condition."

*The Orthodox Church* here means the Orthodox Lutheran or Calvinistic Church. And now, as in the time of Luther, Calvin, and Melancthon, or at least in their earliest time, the Lutheran and Calvinistic theology makes a universal onslaught on all philosophy, and not only on that which is bad and shallow. We are far from accepting the teachings of the ministers whom Mr. Bolce interviewed, as necessarily being the teachings of all Lutheran and Calvinistic ministers of our day. But we do accept these teachings as those of *some* of the ministers of our day. We suspect that Mr. Bolce, somehow, fell in with a circle of those who are the most old-fashioned.

The only one here interviewed, who sounds another key, is Dr. Henry Churchill King, President of Oberlin College. On page 495 he is reported as saying, that there is no sound reason for philosophically or scientifically denying that God has actual access to our minds; and he also says, that we forget that philosophy, as commonly taught, even in avowedly Christian colleges, intentionally ignores all the facts that are involved in historic revelation. It is asserted that, as was said in Bacon's day, philosophy has substituted the raven for the dove as a symbol of the Holy Ghost. Mr. King then endorses James Clerk Maxwell, who wrote that he had looked into most philosophical systems, but had seen none that would work without a God.

In our judgment, Mr. King here speaks like a true thinker. After reading this interview with him, we were not surprised, when we shortly after read in the "Educational Review," a eulogy by Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, of Mr. King as being one of the few great living teachers with the power to stamp his own strong intelligence and character on his pupils.

However, one of his assertions is obscure on account of its brevity and calls for an explanation, which he would most probably accept. Philosophy as taught in *true* Christian colleges does *not* substitute the raven for the dove as a symbol of the Holy Ghost. Philosophy as such derives knowledge of God, and of morals, etc., from principles known by natural reason. But one of the first things which it thus derives is, that it is reasonable to believe God, if He teaches us by revelation even things which it is absolutely possible for us to know by reason. Moreover, philosophy teaches that "truth about God investigated by reason alone, would become known by few men, and only after a long time, and with the admixture of many errors." (St. Thomas I, q. I, a. I.)

As a fact, philosophy is studied more seriously in Catholic colleges than in any others. For example, at Georgetown, Fordham, Holy Cross, etc., the students both of the junior and of the senior year attend classes of philosophy for more than ten hours each week. There philosophy is philosophy and not theology. It derives its conclusions from reason alone. It thus ignores the historic facts of revelation, negatively indeed, but not positively. It holds itself ready to accept any truth

that has been revealed, and does not consider itself free to deny such a fact. It is not an enemy, but a loyal precursor or handmaid of theology, its lawful and beloved queen, and, indeed, the queen of all the sciences.

“Theology is truly a science. There are two kinds of sciences. For some proceed from principles known by the light of reason, as arithmetic, geometry, etc., and among these there are some which proceed from principles known by the light of a superior science, as perspective proceeds from principles made known through geometry, and music from principles known through arithmetic. And in this way, sacred doctrine is a science, because it proceeds from principles known by the light of a superior science, namely: the science of God and the blessed. Whence as music believes the principles given it by arithmetic, so the science of sacred learning believes the principles revealed to it by God. Theology is the loftiest in dignity of all sciences, whether speculative or practical. Other sciences derive their certitude from the natural light of human reason, and it derives its certitude from the supernatural light of the divine reason. The light of human reason is to the light of divine reason, less than the light of the moon to that of the sun. (St. Thomas I, q. 1, a. 2.)

“But not only on the score of certitude, but also on that of the matters treated, is the dignity of the science of theology the most exalted. The principal matters treated by theology are mysteries which by their sublimity transcend reason. Moreover, the end of theology, as it is a *practical* science, is eternal beatitude. This end is not subordinate to the end of any other practical science, but subordinates the ends of all the others to its own. The good of the army is for the good of the State, and the military power is subordinate to the civil, and so all other practical sciences are subordinate to theology. (St. Thomas I, q. 1, a. 5.)

“True and sound philosophy has its own most noble sphere. For it is the function of philosophy to diligently inquire for truth and to rightly and sedulously develop and enlighten human reason, which was darkened, but by no means extinguished, by the fall of the first man. It is likewise its function to perceive, thoroughly understand and promote the object of its knowledge, and very many truths, and to demonstrate, vindicate and defend also a number of those which faith likewise proposes to be believed, as the existence, nature, attributes of God, by arguments derived from its principles, and to pave the way for more rightly holding by faith these dogmas, and also those more hidden dogmas which can be first perceived by faith alone, so that they may in some way be understood by reason. These, indeed, are the things which the severe and most beautiful science of true philosophy ought to do, and on these ought it to dwell.

“But Froschammer attributes to philosophy a liberty which is to be called not liberty of science, but a license of philosophy, which is to

be altogether reprobated, and is not to be tolerated. For he makes a distinction between the philosopher and philosophy. He attributes to the philosopher the right and duty of submitting himself to the authority which he himself approves as true. But he denies both this right and duty to philosophy, and asserts that it ought not and can not take any account of revealed doctrine, or submit itself to authority. . . . Moreover, the same author so eagerly and rashly defends the liberty or rather the unbridled license of philosophy that he is not ashamed to assert that the Church should not only never make any animadversions on philosophy, but should also tolerate the errors of philosophy itself, and leave it to itself to correct itself. Whence it comes to pass that, philosophers necessarily share this liberty of philosophy, and are thus also freed from all law.

“The Church by the power committed to her through its Divine Author, has not only the right, but also and especially the duty of not tolerating, but proscribing and condemning all errors, if the integrity of faith and the salvation of souls so demand. And there is incumbent on every philosopher who wishes to be a son of the Church, and on all philosophy, the duty never to speak against the things which the Church teaches, and to retract those things about which the Church has admonished them.” (Pius IX, Dec. 11, 1862; Denzinger, page 448.)

Here we see Rome praising philosophy and blaming its excessive claims for the rights of reason.

And now we shall see the same Rome blaming another school of philosophy for sinning by defect and decrying the true powers and rights of reason.

In the earlier part of the nineteenth century, there arose in the Church in Italy, France, and Belgium, the school of the Traditionalists. These philosophers were so irritated and disgusted by the French Encyclopedists, and radical revolutionists, and the German disciples of Kant, and the English free-thinkers and their combined attacks on supernatural revelation as a fact and necessity, and by their exaggerated exaltation of the powers of natural reason at the expense of all teaching or governing authority, that these Catholics denied the power of reason to give certitude on anything, and especially on anything religious or moral. One of these philosophers, named Louis Eugene Bautain, was born in 1796, and died in 1867. He was a priest of great merit, and a professor at Strasburg and aspired to be a founder of a Religious Order. To remain in good standing, he was required by Rome to subscribe the following propositions, which he did on September 8, 1840:

"1. Reasoning can, with certitude, prove the existence of God, and the infinity of His perfections. Faith, a heavenly gift, is posterior to revelation; hence, it can not be alleged against an atheist to prove the existence of God.

"5. With regard to these various questions, reason precedes faith, and ought to lead to it.

"6. Although through original sin, reason has been rendered weak and dark, yet in it there has remained enough of clearness and strength to lead us with certainty to the existence of God, and to the revelation made to the Jews through Moses, and to Christians through our adorable Man-God."

The following texts from the Vatican Council of 1870, likewise touch the errors of Traditionalism:

"To this divine revelation it is, indeed, to be attributed that those things which, in things divine, are *not* in themselves impervious to human reason, can be known also in the present condition of the human race by all, readily and with firm certitude, and without any admixture of error.

"If any one shall say that God, one and true, our Creator and Lord, can not be known with certainty by the natural light of human reason, through those things which have been made, let him be anathema."

Indeed, how could those whom Our Lord has made the keepers of the deposit of divine revelation have said the contrary with the plain texts of the Scriptures and Fathers under their eyes?

Thus Psalm 13 begins: "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt and are abominable in their ways."

What is the obvious meaning of this text? It is, "Any one is a fool for saying in his heart, for thinking or wishing to think that there is no God. Only he, whose ways are abominable, will say such a thing in his heart." As La Bruyere says, "You can not show me one man who was honest, chaste and free from conceit and pride, and said in his heart, there is no God."

We read in Wisdom, chapter 13:

"All men are vain in whom there is not the knowledge of God; and who, by these good things that are seen, could not understand Him that is. Neither by attending to the works, have acknowledged who was the workman. But have imagined, either the fire, or the wind, or the swift air, or the circle of the stars, or the sun and moon, to be the gods that rule the world.

"With whose beauty, if they being delighted, took them to be gods; let them know how much the Lord of them is more beautiful than they. . . . Or if they admired their power, and their effects, let them understand by them that He that made them is mightier than they.

"For by the greatness of the beauty, and of the creature, the creator of them may be seen, so as to be known thereby.

"But yet as to these, they are less to be blamed. For they perhaps err, seeking God, and desirous to find Him.

"For being conversant among His works, they search, and they are persuaded that the things are good which are seen.

"But then again, they are not to be pardoned. For if they were able to know so much as to make a judgment of the world, how did they not more easily find out the Lord thereof?"

We read in Acts xiv. 14-16, the words of St. Paul:

"We also are mortals, men like unto you, preaching to you to be converted from these vain things to the living God, who made the heaven and the earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them; Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.

"Nevertheless He left not Himself *without testimony*, doing good from heaven, giving rains, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with good and gladness."

Finally we read in Rom. i. 18-22:

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and injustice to those men that detain the truth of God in injustice. Because that which is known of God is manifest in them. For God hath manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; His eternal power also and divinity; so that they are inexcusable.

"Because that, when they knew God, they have not glorified Him as God, or given thanks; but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened.

"For professing themselves to be wise they became fools."

In the following verses the Apostle speaks of the Jews having a revealed law written on the tables of Moses, and of the Gentiles having engraven on their hearts by God, a law giving them knowledge of things wrong, and knowledge that those who do these things are worthy of death, or the extreme penalty to be inflicted by God, and thus, a knowledge of the things of the moral law and of God, as its author and avenger. The witness to this law is each one's conscience, accusing or defending. Such is the substance of St. Paul's doctrine.

In the Psalms, in Wisdom, in the Acts, in Romans, what is the lesson about reason, taught us by the word of God? Is

it that natural reason without supernatural divine revelation can not know that there is a God? Is it not that God, as author of nature, has manifested His existence, His eternal power and majesty, and His kindly providence to human reason reflecting on what it sees in the existence and order of the physical universe? Is it not that He has manifested the existence of His moral law to each man, who reflects on what he sees in his own heart? Has he not thus manifested Himself as the Maker and Avenger of the natural moral law? Is there any mention of the need of supernatural revelation, or of the teaching authority of all men, or even, of our parents, for us to learn these truths as they are, for us to know Him who is? Is it not said that ignorance of God, with these manifestations before us, is, in any one whomsoever, an inexcusable, unpardonable crime, and even folly? And, therefore, is it not the plain teaching of the Holy Scriptures that the knowledge of God, by the use of our natural reason, is possible and most easy for every human being?

St. Paul elsewhere teaches us that our faith is a reasonable homage, that revealed truth has power to capture and captivate every human intelligence.

Suppose that a genius, a modern Augustine, comes to a priest and lays open the state of his mind as follows:

“I knocked at the door of a church across the way. It clings to the teaching of Calvin and Luther on original sin, and on its effects in the soul. And here is what I was there told: ‘Our first parents were created in the state of grace, and to the image and likeness of God. They indeed received from God the power to know Him and things divine, religious and moral. They had free will, or the power not to touch or eat forbidden fruit, the power to avoid every thought, word, or deed against the law of God.

“‘But when Adam and Eve sinned by eating the forbidden fruit in Eden, and were driven out, their souls then became more naked and weak than their bodies. Each one of their descendants was born in original sin, and not in the state of grace; and not one since them has been created to the image and likeness of God, has received in his creation, the power of will to choose between any moral good and evil, or the power of mind to know any truth pertaining to God or things

of God. Only with supernatural interior grace is any will able to choose *any* good, or to reject *any* evil, and only with supernatural revelation published for all, and with the supernatural faith given immediately by God to each individual, is any mind able to know even that God exists, and is wise and truthful, and is worthy of belief, if He has spoken for me, and that as a fact, He has spoken for me to believe and obey Him.'

"At the door of that old-fashioned orthodox Protestant church there was cited to me, the first verse from the parable of the Good Samaritan: 'A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers who also stripped him, and having wounded him, went away, leaving him half dead.' (Luke x. 30.) And the following was the commentary: 'This man was a figure of human nature, as it is, in every soul since the fall. It is down and has left Jerusalem, the vision of peace, for Jericho, the valley of darkness. And it is stripped of *all* that man possessed in Paradise, and of *all* that he would have continued to possess, if he had remained there, and had not been driven out into the valley of the shadow of death. God created Adam and Eve to His own image and likeness, and this image and likeness consist in the powers to know and love God and things of God, and they, and their descendants were stripped of these powers.'

"Leaving this door, I knocked at the door of a liberal non-dogmatic Protestant church hard by. There I was told that there is no such thing as original sin. But, I asked, if, according to this church, I could know by my natural reason that there is a God, that He can neither deceive, nor be deceived, and that He has spoken externally, supernaturally, has revealed truths for me to believe and practise? What was my surprise when I heard there, almost word for word, the answer attributed to modernists by Pius X in one of the first paragraphs of his Encyclical '*Pascendi Dominici Gregis*.'

"To begin from philosophy, the modernists place the foundation of religious philosophy in that doctrine which they call agnosticism. According to it, human reason is absolutely confined to phenomena, that is, to things which appear, and under the form in which they appear. It has neither the right nor the power to trespass beyond the limits of phenomena. Therefore, it has not the power to raise itself to God, or to know, in any way through those things which



appear, His existence. Hence, it is inferred that God can not in any way directly be the object of science, and as to history, that God is, by no means, to be regarded, as a historical subject. Each one will easily understand what becomes of natural theology, and of the motives of credibility and of external revelation, with these modernistic principles once granted. Indeed, the modernists do away entirely with them all, and relegate them to intellectualism, a system as they say, ridiculous, and long since completely dead. Nor is it any check on them that these monstrosities of errors have been most openly condemned by the Church.”

Our modern Augustine continues:

“I confess that I am an intellectualist. I have read most of the philosophical works of the greatest thinkers of the human race, and they are all intellectualists to a man. The sophists were not intellectualists, but Socrates and his disciples pulverized them. I have observed men, women, and children of many races, and all their words and actions manifest to my mind that they, too, are intellectualists. The agnostic is thus convicted of setting himself up as a judge condemning the universal and constant consent and common sense of the human race, the voice of rational nature itself. Our friends, the agnostic philosophers themselves, strike me as the strongest advocates of intellectualism. Outside of the philosophy class-room, they talk and act like everybody else, like true intellectualists. But especially in the class-room do they assert without apparent fear of error, and thus with pretended certitude (alleged by them to be impossible) that their system *is* true, and that our system, or intellectualism, *is* not only held by no sane philosopher, and has long *been* dead, and *is* absurd. Here while contradicting the common consent and the common sense of the human race, they still affirm that they know many things as these *are* in reality. Objective truth is that which *is*. He who asserts that he knows that which *is*, asserts that he knows objective truth. And he who asserts that the opposite of what he holds *is* not only false, but ridiculous, asserts that he knows some truth without any fear of error, and that he has most certain knowledge of something.”

Augustine here asks, and receives from the priest, a child's catechism, and reads from the Act of Faith: “O, my God, I firmly believe all the sacred truths which Thy Holy Catholic Church believes and teaches, because Thou hast revealed them,

Who canst neither deceive nor be deceived." And he says: "I would like to have an understanding with you as an intelligent representative of the Catholic view. I am not a child, or a man without education. Those of their class do not see all the difficulties of the case, or at least do not realize them as distinctly as myself. What may move them to have true faith, may not be enough to move me. They are told by their parents and pastors: "There is a God; He can not deceive or be deceived; and a man appeared on earth, who said He was God and proved it by His unique beautiful life, and by many miracles and prophecies, and finally said: "You need not believe Me, unless I die and raise Myself to life." And He died and raised Himself to life on the third day, as He had said. And thus, we know that He is God and most good, and that all He said is true. Moreover, He founded a Church and promised to be with it in its teaching all days, even to the consummation of the world. And the Roman Catholic Church is the *oldest* of all those claiming to be the one Church of Christ, and it is thus manifestly the one Church, and I believe all that it believes and teaches, because God revealed it.

"Every Catholic child or uneducated person hears and knows all this, at least confusedly, or, as people now say, subconsciously. The child has a knowledge which is sufficient for itself. It knows revealed truth, it has no fear of error, and there is a logically valid connection between its subjective knowledge and the things known. There is nothing here unreasonable. But its motives of belief are sufficient, not absolutely, but only respectively or relatively to the child. It can not exercise its reason as fully as I do mine. It needs to take more things on the authority of parents and pastors. And Providence in its sweetness has given the child more readiness to rely on human authority for the preambles of faith. Mind, I say preambles, and not motives. These preambles are necessary conditions, and not the immediate cause, or motive of the child's faith. This cause, or motive, is the authority of God revealing. The cause of the kindling of a log of wood may be a flaming torch. But before this torch sets the log on fire, I may have dried the sap or water out of the log, and I may have applied the torch. The torch was the immediate cause of the burning; the removal of the

impediments and the application of the torch were conditions prerequisites for the same burning. Now, before I believe that Jesus is God and good on account of the authority of God revealing the truth, must not I, taken as I am, first know by my own reason that there is a God, and that He can neither deceive, nor be deceived? And must I not also know by reason or history, the fact that God has revealed this? Must I not know that this truth has been proposed to me by God, whether immediately in Scripture and Tradition, or mediately through the teaching of the Church?"

The priest who knows his theology calls Augustine's attention to the words of the text cited above from the Encyclical of Pius X. There the Holy Father says, that without the power of reason, and its use, it is all over with natural theology, and the motives of credibility, and the knowledge of external revelation. Thus it is all over with natural knowledge of God by reason and the corresponding natural love for Him, and likewise, it is all over with supernatural knowledge of God by revelation and faith, and the corresponding supernatural love.

We have insisted on the necessity of our power to know God's existence and wisdom and veracity, by the use of natural reason. We have not insisted, at any length, on the possibility of miracles and prophecies, and the possibility of their being known by us as such. We have not dwelt on the well-known Easter theme, that nothing is so well proved as the resurrection of Our Lord, and that this miracle and prophecy of Our Lord are an absolute proof that all He taught us is true. After Our Lord's promise to raise Himself up on the third day, if He had not done so, all our faith would be vain, as St. Paul teaches us. But it is clearly proved that He did so, and all our faith is true and certain. However, as Pius X reminds us, if we accept modernistic agnosticism, it is impossible to know either the resurrection, or any other miracle or prophecy vouchsafed by God to us as His great seal, or endorsement of the salutary truths which He revealed, the great seal manifesting that these are the words of the King of nature.

They tell us that their system is founded on historical criticism, and not on philosophy. But all their criticism is founded

on stale philosophism, on their preconceived fancies that miracles and prophecies are impossible, and impossible to be known by man, as Hume contended long before they were born. They may grant that witnesses like the apostles testified to the resurrection, or any other miracle. But their *à priori* hypercriticism with cavalier summariness rules out of their court all that these witnesses say they saw with their eyes, and it dogmatically asserts that all are incompetent to see with their eyes, who believe that miracles are possible to be performed or known. If the reader desires a sample of this procedure, he is referred, among many other recent works, to Father Durand's little book on the "Holy Childhood of Our Lord according to the Gospels." There he will see for himself those who claim a monopoly of sound criticism, throwing out of the Gospels all the parts which narrate the Virgin Birth of Our Lord, and basing their procedure mainly, if not solely, on the ground that those parts narrate that which is supernatural.

That our natural reason can lead us through all necessary preambles to supernatural faith, has been shown above from texts of the Holy Scriptures, and from various documents containing utterances of the Holy See. The same could be easily shown from the unanimous consent of the Holy Father. But the matter is so manifest that it seems almost superfluous to quote special testimonies. Cardinal Franzelin says in his volume on the One God:

"The teaching of the Fathers is so constant, and is adorned by so many eloquent illustrations, that there can not be any room for doubt as to their sentiments. From the apologists, Justin, Athénagoras, Tatian, to Gregory the Great, John Damascene, Bernard, they seize every opportunity to repeat and insist that the knowledge of God is universal among all nations, from *this cause*, that the works of God, placed before all, demonstrate to human reason the existence of God, who is invisible in Himself."

The following are specimens of their teachings:

"Thus Tertullian: 'No one denies, for there is no one who does not know what nature spontaneously suggests, that there is a God, who is the Maker of the universe.'

"Cyprian with Tertullian infers from this: 'it is the height of crime to be unwilling to recognize him of whom you can not be ignorant.'

“Says Gregory Nazianzen: ‘Reason which is from God, and is born with us, and is the first law in us, and is inwoven in all, leads us from things visible to God.’

“Says St. John Chrysostom: ‘Whence was the knowledge of God manifest to them? Did He utter a word to them? By no means. But He did that which could attract them more than any word, whatsoever, He placed the created world before them. Thus, the wise man, the simpleton, the Scythian, the barbarian, being taught the beauty of things visible, from merely gazing at them, can ascend to God.’”

At the beginning of this chapter it was stated, that the Catholic can easily have the firmest assent to the truth that God is infinitely good, and can thus love Him. He can easily know this truth by his natural reason, and can easily love God with natural love corresponding to this natural knowledge. He can also easily know the goodness of God as taught by supernatural revelation, and can likewise easily love Him with supernatural love based on faith. The Church teaches the Catholic the goodness of God, and he knows that the Church is infallible. He is not forbidden to ask her the sources whence she draws her supernatural knowledge. And she answers, from revelation, the Word of God, from the Holy Scriptures, and from Divine Traditions. If she is asked how she knows the teachings of Divine Traditions, she answers that she received them orally from the apostles, and that she has never ceased to exist or live, and is the same now as she was from the beginning, and has had Our Lord and His Holy Spirit always with her, and in her, for the preservation and interpretation of these traditions. If she is asked how she knows that the Gospels, for example, are inspired books, she answers that their inspiration was revealed to her by the inspired apostles, that she thus knows that they are the word of God on the word of God, that she believes the sacred truth that they are inspired, because *God has revealed it*, who can neither deceive nor be deceived, because of the authority of God *revealing* this truth. If I ask the Church, how I can know that there is a God, that He can neither deceive, nor be deceived, etc., she has the ready answer which refers me to my own natural reason.

As we thus see, she can keep the unshaken confidence not only of children and the uneducated, but also of the profound-

est, keenest, and most erudite historians, critics, and philosophers. She can not tolerate rationalistic philosophism which arrogates independence in the face of the teaching authority of God, or the Church. And neither can she tolerate traditionalism or fideism, for they profess to exalt revelation and faith, but, as the Church sees, in reality, they undermine faith, and make it unreasonable.

The Catholic child does not believe a sacred truth merely because his father and mother told him so. He is taught and drilled from his tender age to believe it, because *God* told him so.

How different he is in this, from many a Protestant child, or even octogenarian. One of the latter will usually tell you that he is a Protestant, or believes in this or that sect because his father and mother thus believed before him, and their ancestors thus believed before them. If they are pushed, they must grant that their first Protestant ancestors believed on the authority of Luther, Calvin, or Henry VIII, or some other human founder of their distinct sect, and that the founder had no proof of a special mission from God to teach with authority, and even disclaimed such authority by saying that each one must follow his own private judgment in the choice of his religion, and of each one of his religious tenets.

How similar in this he is to the foolish man that built his house upon the sand, and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and it fell, and great was the ruin thereof, because it was founded on sand. At bottom there was, at most, only doubtful and doubting authority, seen to be such, as soon as there was thought or criticism. How different in this respect is the Catholic, who builds the house of his faith on the rock, on God revealing, on God giving us our powers of reason. And for nineteen centuries the rains fell, the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat on that house, and it fell not, because it was founded on a rock, on God.

The Church is thus seen to be also the kingdom of heaven, like to a grain of mustard seed, which is, indeed, the least of all seeds, but when it is grown up, it is greater than all herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and dwell in the branches thereof. Not only the tiny sparrow, but the eagle, the king of all birds, dwell in the branches

thereof, and find their own place of shelter and repose. And the Catholic system of faith seems to each class of intellects, from the child to the learned genius, as if made specially for itself, by the one God of truth, who made both the Catholic system of faith and every intellect, both of them fitting together better than the parts of a chronometer.

How easy, therefore, it is for the Catholic mind to most firmly assent to the known truth that our God is infinitely good and worthy of our love. How hard for the Catholic, even to believe his own eyes when he sees in black and white, in the writings of Luther, the fact of these, his absurd teachings :

“Reason opposes faith. It is for God alone to give faith and belief, *against nature, against reason*. . . . The Sorbonne, the mother of errors, most wrongly defined that the same thing is true in philosophy and theology. And it was impious in her to condemn those who held the contrary. . . . In theology, it is true that the Word was made flesh. In philosophy, this is simply absurd and impossible. And it is not *less*, but rather *more*, absurd to preach God is man, than if you say, a man is an ass. . . . Reason can only blaspheme and dishonor all that God has said or done. . . . If we have here below a faith which is only imperfect, the cause is that reason is not completely annihilated. . . . In Baptism it is, or ought to be, drowned.” (For these, and other sayings of Luther, see Denifle, *Luther and Lutheranism*, v. 3, p. 275.)

For the Catholic, the Act of Faith is not a mere feeling or sentiment, or emotion of the will. Indeed, he has the will to believe revealed truth. And when he has believed, he is conscious that he had the physical power not to believe. If he is not blind or insane, he is necessitated in his assent to the truths that the sun exists, and that twice two are four. He knows that he has an obligation, a moral necessity to assent to the truth, that Jesus is the Word made flesh, and infinitely good. But this truth is not manifest in itself, like the existence of the sun, like twice two are four. He was physically free to believe it, or not believe it. When he believed, his assent was not physically necessitated, but free. It is an axiom in theology, that the Act of Faith is free, always understanding “free” in the sense of physically and not morally. If it were not free, how could it be the matter of a divine and just precept and menace? “He that believeth not, shall be con-

demned." But physically free as it is, as every Catholic knows, this act, though commanded and influenced by the will, is finally elicited by the intellect, the faculty by which we know truth, whether from its intrinsic or its extrinsic evidence, the authority of a teacher or a witness. Therefore, to the Catholic, assent of intellect, of the reason, to a statement known to be against reason, is a manifest contradiction in terms, an absurdity. Assent to that known to be against reason is an act which the God of truth, the Maker of reason and rational nature, could not be conceived as enjoining on man, or angel, on any one made by Him, a reasonable creature, to ever act reasonably. Granting, by an absurd supposition, that God had commanded me to elicit such an act, it would be physically impossible for me to do so, for me to assent by my reason to that known by me to be against my reason.

How bewildered some readers may be, even when following us in imagining these absurdities. And yet they lie at the bottom of the teachings of Luther, Melancthon and Calvin, and many modernistic professors of philosophy and preachers of the Gospel. For them, if they are consistent, to know the goodness of God by reason, or the goodness of Father, Son or Holy Ghost by revelation, is not only hard, but absolutely impossible. But there is no slightest taint of these absurdities on any part of our system, and, therefore, the knowledge, and the love of God, and of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost is, in this respect, easy for the Catholic. Let *them* say that the act of love for God is hard, hard for *themselves*, after they have thus bewildered themselves. But we do not accept their fanciful notions of faith or reason. We *firmly believe* with our intelligence all the sacred truths which the Holy Catholic Church believes and teaches, because God has revealed them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. And one of these sacred truths is, that our God is infinitely good and deserving of all our love. And, therefore, it is easy for us to love Him with our whole hearts, with the help of the graces merited for us by Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Redeemer, which graces are given to each one of us in the greatest abundance.

Heretofore we have considered knowledge of God and His goodness on the score of its certainty, of the firmness with which the most ordinary Catholic mind adheres to the truths



known by natural reason, or by the authority of God revealing them, and excludes all fear of erring. There is this firmness in every Catholic mind, and it increases as each one practises his faith. The muscles of the arm grow stronger as they are healthily exercised, and faith grows firmer by the same means. And it is notorious how the Church urges her children to make frequent formal acts of faith. In the morning and evening prayers, the people are urged to say with their lips and their heart the Act of Faith, and the Apostles' Creed, and to recite or chant the ampler Nicene Creed, when they are present at Mass. The sign of the cross, and the Friday abstinence are also formal acts of faith in God and Our Lord, and His Church. To produce the fruit of love, the root of faith must be firm against all the rains, floods, and winds of criticism. This firmness is the first thing necessary.

But, as Cardinal Newman speaks, in his "Grammar of Assent," to ensure not only conviction, but also persuasion and action, assent to truth must be not only notional, but also real.

How distinctly and really the Church places before the minds of her children, countless truths about the divine goodness, and its love for us! How vividly she pictures them! How near she brings them to us, and us to them!

A highly educated Christian gentleman not long ago came back from a sojourn in Mexico. According to his mind, from symbolism alone, the pious, unlettered Mexican Indian knows more about the goodness of Our Lord, and His love for us, than many a highly educated Protestant. But further on we will speak at length of Catholic usages and prayers, as exercises of a faith that lives in hope and love. However, we should be already satisfied that for a Catholic, it is most easy to have the knowledge required and sufficient, and even ample, for making acts of love.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *ADDITIONAL ERRORS WHICH MAKE ACTS OF LOVE HARD TO PRACTISE*

**I**N the previously noted thirtieth verse of the tenth chapter of St. Luke we read the following words: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, who also stripped him: and having wounded him went away leaving him half dead."

In this parable of the Good Samaritan, what is the literal sense, the primary lesson intended by Our Lord as He here answers the question of the doctor of the law: "who is my neighbor?" It seems to be that every man is my neighbor, even though he be hostile to me, as was the Jew from Jerusalem to every one of the race and religion of the Samaritan, that like the Good Samaritan I must have neighborly love for every living human being.

Did Our Lord here, besides this primary or literal lesson also intend to teach that the traveler in his misery is a type of Adam and of every human being who fell in Adam and that the Good Samaritan is a type of Himself, who loved us when we were His enemies and alone was able and willing to redeem us? Maldonatus does not himself dare either to affirm or deny, but informs us that whether the sense be typical and intended as such by Our Lord, or whether it be only accommodated, the Fathers say that Our Lord *is* like the Samaritan in goodness and we *are* like this traveler in our misery. Thus it is at least the teaching of the Fathers that there *is* this likeness, and that it applies to the general character and condition of the traveler and of the Samaritan, to the needs of the former and the kind and abundant supply of remedies by the latter. We are not here specially concerned with the priest and the levite seeing the stripped and wounded traveler and passing him by, or with the mystic lesson that the sacrifices and ceremonies of the law of Moses were impotent of themselves to heal man's wound of sin or restore his robe of grace. Neither are we now specially concerned with the lesson that

Our Lord, by the wine and oil and money of His precious blood and divine mercy and love and grace, heals our past sins and makes it possible for us to be pardoned for all future sins into which we may fall. If Adam had not fallen and we had been born to the inheritance of his state of grace and innocence and immortality, yet it would have been possible for us, too, to abuse our own free will and fall from this state by our own personal sin. Then, without the Divine Redeemer promised by occasion of Adam's sin and fall, there would have been no means provided for our pardon and rise; and in this respect our state, with the possession of a Redeemer, is happier than that of Adam before his fall without any Redeemer. This is the most consoling of truths, but is not what here specially concerns us. Our present concern is only with original sin and its sequences, only with the traveler that went down from the bright mount of Jerusalem, the vision of celestial peace, toward darksome Jericho in the rocky desert valley.

Of what was he stripped? In what was he wounded? How was he half dead?

We can conceive man created in the state of *pure or mere nature*, with all the powers and helps essential or proper to him as man and with a destiny assigned by God for his mere natural end.

Or we can conceive him as created in the state of *supernatural grace* and with a destiny to a *supernatural end* and enriched with all manner of privileges or favors and helps which are supernatural and in no way exacted by the gift of his pure nature, but are connatural to his supernatural state and destiny. Thus Adam was created in the state of supernatural grace and endowed with immortality of the body and immunity from concupiscence.

Or finally, we can conceive man as created *in original sin* and without the state of grace or the gifts of immortality of the body or of immunity from concupiscence, but *destined*, on account of the merits of the Divine Redeemer, to a life of *grace* and a *supernatural end*.

The most fundamental of the errors of Lutheranism, Calvinism, Baianism and Jansenism, the one from which they derive the greatest number of their false doctrines, is that Adam's condition in Eden was the state of *pure or mere nature*.

It is a frequent practice of the Holy See, in condemning a series of propositions, to place those which are the most fundamental near the end, as the orator in his peroration or final and strongest effort to gain the main object for which he has been striving in his whole discourse, often briefly sums up at the end the substance of all that he has said before. Thus the Holy See places the following two propositions at the end of the seventy-nine extracted from the works of Baius, the first of the Jansenists:

“The immortality (of body) of the first man was not a benefit of grace but a *natural* condition.

“False is the teaching of doctors that the first man could have been created and established by God without *natural justice*.”

The last two words implicitly assert that the *state* of justice or *grace* of Adam was *natural*. We note that grace then would not be grace or a gratuitous favor, but a thing due by justice, the not giving of which by God would be thus an injustice to man.

Of what was man *stripped* in Adam? The Catholic doctrine grants and teaches that man is born *stripped* of sanctifying grace, and of immunity from concupiscence and death.

But, as it maintains, death and concupiscence are *natural*. If we had been created in the state of mere nature, and destined to a merely natural end and provided with only merely natural means or helps to gain this end, we would all have been subject to concupiscence and death.

But does not Catholic doctrine tell us that concupiscence not only inclines to sin but also comes from sin, is a punishment for sin, for the sin of Adam? Yes, but this doctrine asserts only the historical fact, and does not assert or imply that immunity from concupiscence was natural to Adam, or that we would have received this immunity if we had been created in the state of mere nature.

Is not an act of concupiscence a desire of an object forbidden by God? It is a desire or tendency or impulse of the will to that object, but is not deliberate, is not free. It is a merely *indeliberate* tendency, impulse or inclination. If we had been created in our present state of fallen nature or in the state of mere nature and been placed in Paradise and forbid-

den to eat the fruit of one certain tree, we might have had a craving for that fruit *before* we fully desired to eat it, or even *after* we had freely decided never to eat it. Adam, by the gift of integrity, innocence, immunity from concupiscence, through free will could prevent this craving from inclining his will or from rebelling after his will had commanded it to be still. This privilege of immunity from inclinations to evil was lost to Adam and to us by his sin. But it was supernatural and not natural, and by this loss we were stripped of what was supernatural and not of what was natural. According to Luther and Calvin and Baius and Jansenius, by original sin we have been stripped of faculties that are *natural* to us, and thus not only of immortality, innocence, and sanctifying grace, but also of all intelligence and *free will* with regard to God and to things religious or moral.

We have already considered their error that we are in our fallen state devoid of such intelligence; and we have seen how this doctrine makes hard or impossible that knowledge of our good and loving God which is necessary for us to love Him.

But even with the necessary knowledge of our good and loving God we would not be able to love Him and keep His commandments if we had not free will. And we see each of these four above-mentioned isms teaching that we are all stripped of this by the fall of Adam, by the original sin in which we are conceived and born. The Council of Trent, sess. 6, can. 5, says:

“If any one shall say that since the sin of Adam, man’s free will has been lost and extinguished, or that it is a matter of title alone, nay, that it is a title without a reality, in fine, a fiction invented by Satan, let him be anathema.”

This anathema was occasioned by the well-known error of Luther and Calvin. Whatever freedom of will in things of the soul was admitted by any one of these isms in things religious or moral, was immunity from outward coercion, from coercing, from forcing, and not from interior necessity. The animals are determined to do or not to do a certain thing, not by rational free choice, but by blind, necessitating instinct; and this is why they are not held by us to be morally responsible. According to these isms man is scarcely more physically free in things religious or moral than is the brute.

Hence also the Holy See condemned as heretical the third proposition of Cornelius Jansenius :

“In order to merit and demerit in the state of fallen nature there is not required freedom from *necessity*; but freedom from *coaction* is sufficient.”

From such errors on free will, those isms with a certain consistency derive their errors on concupiscence.

Let us hear the Council of Trent, session 5, in the decree on original sin :

“But this holy synod confesses and is sensible that in the baptized there remains concupiscence or an incentive to sin; which, whereas it is left for our exercise, can not injure those who consent not, but resist manfully by the grace of Jesus Christ. Yea, he who shall have striven lawfully, shall be crowned. This *concupiscence* which the Apostle *sometimes* calls sin, the holy Synod declares that the Catholic Church has never understood to be called sin, as being truly and properly sin in those born again, but because it is *of* sin and *inclines* to sin. And if any one is of a contrary sentiment let him be anathema.”

As we see from this, impulses, no matter how criminal the act to which they impel, are not sins until we freely consent to them.

These isms went on and taught that all evil desires to which reason does not consent are sins in the strict and proper sense, that these acts of the will which are not free are the things forbidden by the last two commandments of God in the Decalogue: “Thou shalt not covet,” thou shalt not have even any indeliberate movements of concupiscence. Hence, they consistently added, God has commanded things which are impossible for us to do. Hence, it was only natural for them to conclude that love for God with our whole heart or will is a commandment impossible for any one of us to fulfil; for love of God with our whole heart implies the will to keep all the commandments. The following is the very first of the famous five condemned propositions of Jansenius :

“Some precepts of God are, for men just, willing and striving, according to the present powers which they have, impossible. There is also lacking to them the grace by which they may be made possible.”

Jansenius, a Catholic professor and bishop, taught this in

the face of the antecedent teaching of the Council of Trent, session 6, chapter 11:

“No one ought to make use of that rash saying prohibited by the Fathers under anathema, that the observance of the commandments of God is impossible for one that is justified. For God commands not impossibilities, but by commanding both admonishes thee to do what thou art able, and to pray for what thou art not able, and aids thee that thou mayest be able; whose commandments are not heavy; whose yoke is sweet and whose burden light. For whose are the sons of God, love Christ. But they who love Him keep His commandments, as Himself testifies, which assuredly with the divine help they can do. . . . Those are opposed to the orthodox doctrine of religion who assert that man sins, venially at least, in every good work, or, what is yet more insupportable, that he merits eternal punishment, as those who state that the just sin in all their works.”

If free will does not exist, it is in a manner consistent to say that if there is such a thing as sin possible to man, then every evil impulse is a sin. Love for Our Lord with our whole heart or above all things, necessarily includes the will to keep His commandments. If the fact that we have concupiscence or evil desires or inclinations of the will implies the real decisive will not to keep all the commandments, then love for God in the proper sense is impossible for all of us, for all of us have concupiscence, and are subject to its movements.

After denying that we have free will, and denying the reality of the distinction and difference between desires which are free or deliberate and those which are not free and are only indeliberate, the Lutherans, Calvinists, and Jansenists, if not uniformly, at least frequently, denied the real distinction and difference between mortal and *venial* sin. So that to them every sin is mortal and of itself excludes justice or grace from the soul and merits eternal damnation, and is absolutely inconsistent with true friendship or love for God with our whole heart. Thus a fully deliberate lie about a trivial matter, a wilful falsehood told by way of exaggeration or excuse without any harm done or intended to any one but myself, or a sudden impulse of resentment with which my brain boiled and my face was flushed for a second, but which was promptly checked by a strong effort of my will, any wrong act of half knowledge or half consent of a child or a sick man, any venial sin is a cessation of love for God, sunders

my friendship for God and His friendship for me. He commands me to avoid every venial sin under pain of losing His gift of sanctifying grace. The twentieth condemned proposition of Baius says:

“No sin is by its nature venial, but every sin deserves eternal punishment.”

His seventy-sixth proposition says:

“As long as there remains in him who loves, *anything of carnal concupiscence*, he does not fulfil the precept, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart.’” (Deut. vi. 5; Matt. xxii. 37.)

This Baian error is the same as the Lutheran on the last two commandments.

The teachings of these isms as to God's distribution of graces, on the one hand make Him out a tyrant who is not worthy of love, but of hate and execration; and, on the other, represent at least many men, the large majority of mankind as made and left radically impotent to love God. He who would desire to see all these specific decrees, is referred to Denzinger under the titles, “Distribution of Graces, Predestination, Reprobation, Economy of Salvation.” Against one or another of these isms the Church decreed the following doctrines which had been contradicted: God wishes *all* men to be saved. Christ died for *all*, and not for the predestined alone and not for believers alone. God predestines *no one* to evil, *whoever* perishes, perishes from the merit of his *own* iniquity. God does *not* abandon the justified unless He is first abandoned by them. He gives grace to those who ask aright, and does *not* suffer us to be tempted above that which we can do. He offers the grace of conversion to *all* sinners. He does *not* refuse grace to those who are not predestined. These may be Christians and members of the Church, whereas one may be predestined and outside of the visible Church. It is false, that the prayers of one foreknown as to be reprobated, avail for no one; that outside of the Church no grace is granted; that the first grace is faith; or is the remission of sins as if to one not justified no grace was given. It is false that all grace is efficacious; that none is ever merely sufficient; that grace when given *always overpowers* the will; that when we have sinned we have not received *any* grace not to sin.



The Law or the Old Testament was good and the work of the One God. It did not contain fear only but also love and grace, although of itself alone, it did not justify. Our sacraments both signify and give grace to the soul, theirs only signified grace.

As has been already indicated, the Lutherans and Calvinists represented the *Church* as the assembly of the just or of the elect and as an invisible Mother who is hard or rather impossible to find, and when found has no authority or power from God to guide His children by laws or commands, or to feed them with sacraments, or to teach them by doctrines which are certainly the word of God. Many of the Jansenists taught something very similar, at least sometimes. But at all times they represented the Church as a stepmother who should be stingy and hard hearted in dispensing graces to her children through the sacraments. They taught that there is a degree of true love for God *above all things* which does *not* justify before the real reception of a sacrament, that this or perfect contrition is *required* and that imperfect contrition is not sufficient with the actual reception of Baptism or Penance, and that these sacraments should not be given to those who have only imperfect contrition, only attrition.

Many, if not all of them, and often, if not always, agreed with Luther and Calvin that imperfect contrition proceeding from the consideration of the turpitude of sin or from the fear of hell and punishments is even wicked.

Before absolution they exacted not only a resolution of amendment, but long amendment itself, and not only the acceptance of the penance given by the priest but the actual fulfilment of long and severe penances.

They laid down rules for confessing which make the tribunal of mercy utterly devoid of the spirit of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and full of the leaven of the pharisees, who delighted to bind loads on the consciences of others. And they gloried in inventing severest interpretations of real laws of God and the Church.

As far as we know, it is the spirit of all modern law among civilized peoples to hold that in criminal matters an obligation which *is not* and *can not* be known, is practically null and void. What jury would condemn as guilty of crime and worthy of

a legal penalty any individual who *did* not and *could* not know that his act had been forbidden by the law? Moreover, where there is a prudent reason for doubting the existence of an obligation in a particular case, this obligation can not be sanely said to be *known*. Thus, there are grave reasons for believing that according to the precepts of the Church and her mind, women and men who have completed the respective ages of 49 and 59 years are not bound any longer to fast. Probabilism concluded that thence it is *certain* that they are not bound. The rigorism of Jansenism held that such a doubt does not excuse from the obligation, that probabilism in the sense explained is laxism, immoralism.

The same rigorism held that we are bound to confess any sin with regard to which there is a prudent doubt whether we committed it or fully consented to it, or whether it is grievous or whether we have not already confessed it. This rigorism went so far as to hold that we are bound to confess when we fear lest we may be obliged to confess and have no positive reason for such fear. This made confession a true butchery of the soul. The Council of Trent had said only that penitents must confess all the mortal sins of which they have consciousness or memory. Sane theology added, no certainty, then no consciousness, no memory.

The Jansenistic rigorism with regard to the dispositions necessary for receiving holy communion early, daily, frequently, or even once a year, is notorious. We get some idea of this rigorism from the following propositions condemned on December 7, 1690:

"22. Those are to be considered sacrilegious who pretend to have a right to receive communion *before* they have accomplished condign penance for their delinquencies.

"23. Those are likewise to be driven away from holy communion in whom there is not yet a love for God which is most pure and free from every admixture."

The following words of Pius X are an authoritative judicial historical statement of these Jansenistic tendencies and of their invading the minds of some Catholic theologians and through them the clergy and people.

"But when in later times piety grew cold and more especially under the plague of Jansenism, disputes began to arise concerning the dis-

positions with which it is proper to receive communion frequently or daily, and writers vied with one another in imposing more and more stringent conditions as necessary to be fulfilled. The result of such disputes was that very few were considered worthy to communicate daily and to derive from this most healing sacrament its most abundant fruits, the rest being content to partake of it once a year or once a month or at the utmost once a week. Nay to such a pitch was rigorism carried that whole classes of persons were excluded from a frequent approach to the holy table, for instance, those engaged in trade or even those living in the state of matrimony. . . .

"On December 7, 1690, by the decree of Pope Alexander VIII, there was condemned the proposition of Baius demanding a most pure love for God without any admixture of any defect, as requisite on the part of those who wished to approach the holy table.

"Yet the poison of Jansenism, which under the pretext of showing due honor and reverence to the Holy Eucharist, had infected the minds even of good men, did not entirely disappear, etc., etc."

In addition to these errors of Jansenism we must bear in mind the following ones of Lutheranism and Calvinism. These latter taught that Our Lord instituted only *two* sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and that these two are only *signs* of grace. Thence sacraments according to their teaching do not produce and cause inward grace in the soul. They only excite or awaken faith in us and God gives His graces according to our faith. How much more generous Our Lord is according to the Catholic doctrine! For He gave us not only two but seven sacraments and He made each one of these, true causes of grace to souls properly disposed and prepared.

So that we here see Our Lord's generosity of love in the gifts not of two nude signs but of seven true causes applying to our souls the graces which He merited for us from Bethlehem to Calvary, in seven copious channels through which the Most Precious Blood from His most sacred wounds flows over our souls to wash them and make them white as snow and to decorate them with His own divine beauty and make them sharers of His own divine nature and strength.

We must also bear in mind the difference between the Catholic and the Protestant doctrine on the real presence and the Mass, the Protestant doctrine taking away numbers of strongest incentives to love Our Lord. How touching to human hearts is every element of the Catholic doctrine of transub-

stantiation, the wonderful and singular conversion of the whole substance of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Our Lord with His human soul and His divinity accompanying them—all of them, truly, really, substantially present under the forms and appearances of bread and wine! How touching is the Catholic doctrine that this presence is permanent and not only for the moment when Our Lord's body and blood are received! How much more striking is His love for us in being present all the day in our churches and not only for a moment, but ever waiting in the tabernacle to receive our visits and to dispense His graces!

Moreover, according to Catholic doctrine, Our Lord gives us His body and blood not only as a sacrament, but also as a true sacrifice in the proper and strict sense; not only as a sign and means of grace to sanctify our souls, but also as a sacrifice offered to God, to honor God. How can I, poor worm of the earth, properly honor God and express my homage in recognition of His supreme excellence and sovereignty and of my own utter inferiority and dependence and subjection? How can I properly thank Him for all the benefits I have received from His goodness? How can I properly propitiate Him for my sins or for those of others near and dear to me, whether they be living or dead? How can I properly petition God for future benefits and make the prayer of impenetration? How often we feel like the people of Israel at the foot of Sinai overcome by the sense of our own nothingness and unworthiness, and how we would wish for a Moses to be our intermediary in treating with God. And in the Mass, Our Lord, of whom Moses was the type, is our pontiff taken from men and constituted for men in the things of God. In the Mass He represents us and for us adores and thanks and propitiates and petitions in a manner worthy of God Himself. On the cross He offered Himself once to exhaust the sins of many, and risen from the dead He dieth no more. According to the divine economy, for us, death is a night in which no man laboreth, death ends the measure of our merits. Then we are judged according to our previous good works done in the state of grace. When we die in the Lord each one of these previous good works follows us and fixes our degree of glory and happiness for eternity. The good works done by us in

heaven, our countless acts of purest love, none of these is a source of merit for us according to the plan of God. Likewise the merits of Our Lord Himself were accumulated only while He was a traveler on the way of His mortal life. They were completed and closed when He bowed down His head and gave up the ghost after crying out with a loud voice, "It is consummated." Each grace received by any soul before His coming or since His death, is a grace of Christ, a grace merited by Christ during His mortal life. Each one of the sacraments confers grace only because of the merits of Christ thus acquired. Each one of them only applies those merits to our souls. On the cross the body and blood of the Lamb of God there literally slain, was the victim, the outward object offered by its destruction in a true sacrifice, and recognized tellingly that all the best things we have are from God the supreme Arbiter of life and death. On the cross Our Lord was our High Priest according to the bloody rite of Aaron. As a priest He willingly ascended the altar of the cross and offered Himself, His body and blood, because He willed. And there He consummated His merits of every manner of celestial benedictions gained for us. But on our altars His body and blood are not only a sacrament given to us and sanctifying us, but also a victim sacrificed by Christ to God, honoring God. The "Victim on our altar is absolutely the same as the Victim on the cross. There it was visible under its own proper form and appearance, and here only under the form and appearances of bread and wine, but here is still truly, really, substantially present. On the cross and on our altar the High Priest also is absolutely the same. In each one of the sacraments Christ is the principal agent, the chief meritorious cause and the chief efficient or physical cause of the sanctifying or actual graces conferred. Man is the minister, deputy, agent, instrument of Christ. Baptism confers sanctifying grace, by which we are born again, by which our souls are regenerated and receive a new, a supernatural life. This sanctifying grace blots out original sin and also actual mortal or venial sin, if there be such stains on a soul. It blots out not only the guilt of sin but every debt of disinheritance or of positive eternal or temporal punishment which may be due. In Baptism the soul is also marked by a spiritual character

which is never blotted out on earth, in heaven, or even in hell. This character marks the soul as a Christian, as one to whom the gates to all the sacraments are opened and as one who specially belongs to Christ and has renounced Satan and all his works and pomps.

How could a man or even an archangel or any finite creature produce these supernatural effects as the principal meritorious or physical cause? When we consider these effects of Baptism we realize the reasons of St. Augustine's often cited saying: "Peter baptizes, it is Christ that baptizes. Paul baptizes, it is Christ that baptizes. Judas baptizes, it is Christ that baptizes."

Similarly in the tribunal of mercy, Peter, Paul or Judas exercises the power of the keys of heaven, the power of loosing, the power of forgiving sins, which are offenses not against Peter, Paul, or Judas, but against God and His own Infinite Divine Majesty, committed by me, created out of nothing that I might love my Creator. Peter, Paul, or Judas having heard my sorrowful confession pronounces the sentence, "I absolve thee from thy sins." But it is Christ that absolves. The same principle holds in all the sacraments. Each one of them thus confers sanctifying grace on him who opposes no obstacle.

And this principle holds most strikingly in the sacrament of the Eucharist and the sacrifice of the Mass. Peter, Paul, or Judas says over bread and wine, "This is My body. This is My blood." Whose body? Whose blood? Christ's body, Christ's blood. By a marvelous and singular or unique conversion the whole substance of the bread and wine are changed into the substance of the pre-existing sacred body and precious blood and the accidents, the form and appearances, of bread and wine remain. How far more miraculous than the change of Lot's wife into the pillar of salt and than the change of the water into the wine of the wedding feast of Cana! Peter, Paul, or Judas pronounces the words of consecration, but Christ alone is the chief operator of this marvelous and singular miraculous conversion.

And Peter, Paul, or Judas, in this consecration, is a priest of God according to the order of Melchisedech, offering the victim of the body and blood of the "Lamb as it were slain," under the separate forms, "This is My body," "This is My

blood." And he offers this victim made present from separate matters of bread and wine. And he makes this victim present sacramentally so that it can be carried here and there without resistance as a lifeless object, and can be eaten and drunk as the flesh and blood of victims really slain, with the flesh and blood really separated in death. And Peter, Paul, or Judas is a priest offering the true eucharistic sacrifice to God, offering the lamb mystically dead, as it were slain. But the Chief Priest who here offers this sacrifice is Christ Himself.

On the cross Our Divine Lord gained for us the decisive but bloody victory over death and sin and Satan. On our altars this same Soldier, King, Priest, in person rehearses in an unbloody manner the bloody tragedy of Calvary, offers this true sacrifice in memory of Himself, and announces His own death until He come. And He offers Himself as the clean offering foretold by Malachy from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same and the name of the Lord of Hosts is thus great among the gentiles or all the nations of the earth. Or rather the sun now never sets on the sacrifice of the Mass. And Our Lord thus fulfils the prophecy of Holy David, the royal psalmist:

"With Thee is the principality in the day of Thy strength; in the brightness of the saints; from the womb before the day star I begot Thee.

"The Lord hath sworn and He will not repent; Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech." (Ps. cix.)

And in Genesis xiv. 18, we read:

"Melchisedech the king of Salem, bringing forth bread and wine, for he was the priest of the most high God, blessed Abram and said: Blessed be Abram by the most high God, who created heaven and earth, and blessed be the most high God, by whose protection the enemies are in thy hands."

Our Lord is thus our Melchisedech, which means "king of justice," and our king of Salem, which means "king of peace." And an order of priesthood is according to the rite of sacrifice and the sacrifice of Melchisedech as priest was in bread and wine and Our Lord in the Mass which is celebrated at every moment and will continue to be celebrated all days, even to the consummation of the world, Himself gives glory to God

in the highest and peace on earth to men of good will and therein is our priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech. And while thus Himself re-presenting by the Mass on our altars the sacrifice of the cross on Mount Calvary, He applies to the souls of the living and the dead the merits of the sacrifice which He consummated there by His bloody death. On Mount Calvary He laid up treasures for us all, on our altars He Himself, by the key of the Mass, unlocks these same treasures to us in particular. On Mount Calvary He was like Moses in the desert striking the rock. On our altars He is like the same Moses using the ministry of His assistants to distribute among the multitude the waters that gushed from the rock smitten by the rod.

Why does tender Mother Church impose on the conscience of each one of her children who has attained the years of discretion the precept, under pain of mortal sin, of assisting at Mass on every Sunday and holy-day of obligation? It is because, as the Council of Trent teaches, the Mass is the same as the sacrifice of Mount Calvary, differing only in the manner of offering. The manner was bloody there, and it is unbloody here. But the sacrifice, the true sacrifice, is the same. Here are the same Victim and the same Priest offering this same Victim, and the same fruits of the sacrifice merited there are applied to our souls by the sacrifice here.

If we could conceive all the saints of earth and all the blessed and angels of heaven headed by Mary Immaculate praying to God for us without reference to the merits of Our Lord, one Mass offered through the hands of the lowliest priest in a backwoods chapel amid the poverty of Bethlehem would be far more august and precious, even though the incense of those prayers ascended before the throne of God for a thousand years. For in the Mass our Divine Lord in true sacrifice, or the noblest manner of human public or private worship, and in the Christian sacrifice the noblest of all sacrifices instituted as the chief perfection of the one perfect religion, than which there is never to be another more perfect on earth, Himself represents us before God; does homage for us to His excellence and sovereignty; thanks Him for us for the benefits which we have received; propitiates Him for us and for ours living and dead; and begs new favors for us.



What condescension, self-abasement, and self-denial and what love for us He shows in each Mass!

How often in the devotions to the Sacred Heart we dwell on this theme, and also on the real presence and holy communion!

Such considerations are commonplaces among Catholics, especially those who are devout. They are certainly strongest incentives to love of Our Lord. They inflamed the Jansenists to fury and hate.

These and countless other Catholic motives of love were taken away by those who took away faith in the real presence and the Mass. Luther and Calvin, by a few strokes of their pen, wiped out all these and countless other motives of love for Our Lord from the hearts of millions of their disciples from generation to generation.

One who had been accustomed to frequent visits to St. Peter's of Rome and Notre Dame of Paris, traveled from the continent to London and visited the monument of Sir Christopher Wren and felt a chill at the Protestant nakedness and coldness of the interior of St. Paul's Cathedral. What a contrast there with the wealth of sacred beauties in St. Peter's and Notre Dame!

A venerable Catholic woman was so unfortunate as to see her grandchildren brought up outside of the faith of her fathers. She was broken-hearted that she could not take them to see the little Jesus of Christmas or to kiss the crucifix on Good Friday or train them to make the sign of the cross or to lisp the names of Jesus or Mary or Joseph or their guardian angel or to pray for the soul of their grandfather, or to see the stations of the cross or to kneel before the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. One of her own daughters, brought up in a most Catholic atmosphere, says that she was penetrated with love for God from the first moment she knew there is a God and that she was over twenty-one before she could be brought to believe that there is any one who does not love God. Is the latter a simpleton? She is a distinguished artist and was a no less distinguished nurse of our sick and wounded soldiers in our camps and on our transports during the Spanish war.

## CHAPTER IX

### *CATHOLIC TRUTHS OPPOSED TO THE PRECEDING ERRORS MAKE ACTS OF LOVE EASY*

LET us suppose that a well-informed and pious Catholic has perused the texts and considerations of the preceding chapters. He might here complete his meditation on them and make a repetition according to the method of St. Ignatius by returning to himself and asking what fruit he reaps from each point for his own soul, what he has done in the past and what he will do in the future.

To agnostics he will say: I pray you to hold me excused from bowing down my soul and sacrificing my reason and faith to your ancient idol clothed in modern words. I do not accept the impotence of my reason in things religious and moral, either from the Catholic traditionalists condemned by the Church, or from William James and his pragmatists, or from Herbert Spencer and his agnostics, or from Immanuel Kant and his hypercriticism, or from Berkeley so properly ridiculed by Dean Swift, or from the nominalists of the Middle Ages, or from the sophists whose skepticism was so ably refuted by the questionings of Socrates and his eloquent disciples, or from the primitive reformers and the Jansenists and their false assumption that original sin has stripped me of my very nature, and of my intelligence. No; with the Scriptures, Fathers, Popes, Councils, and the constant, universal consent of the human race and my own common sense, I see that by natural reason I easily know God and His goodness and lovingness.

With their false and absurd starts, love for God is hard and impossible for them and they are consistent in teaching that it is hard and impossible. I take my start, not with them but with my common sense and its principle that reason is not impotent. And love for God is thus so easy for me that its acts ought to be frequent in my soul as long as I am resolved to avoid mortal sin.

I start with the first words of the catechism: Who made you? God. How did He make you? Out of nothing, by His word only. To whose image and likeness did He make you? To His own image and likeness. Is this image and likeness in your body or in your soul? It is chiefly in my soul. Why is your soul the image and likeness of God? Because, like God, it is a spirit and immortal and can never die. Why else? Because as there are three persons in God, so there are three powers in my soul, understanding, memory, and free will; and God pours into my soul with habitual grace the three virtues of faith, hope, and charity. As I know, there are many degrees of perfection in my imaging God and being like to Him. It is the essence of every human soul to be immortal and endowed with the powers of understanding, memory, and free will. This is the first degree. When I use these powers and my will freely acts according to right reason and rational nature, it imitates God, who always wills only what is according to His own divine, infinite reason. Every good act of my free will thus imitates God and makes me godlike.

Some virtues are better than others and as my will practises greater virtues and practises them oftener, in the same proportion I become *more* godlike, a more perfect image and likeness of God.

Prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance are moral virtues, because when I practise them my will wills that which is according to my rational nature, my right reason, the standard or rule which God gave me and commanded me to follow when He created me to be a rational creature and to act like one.

But God my Creator and Sovereign Lord, as a fact, has not only given me my created reason but has also in many things unveiled to me His own uncreated reason by immediately telling me many truths about things to be believed and done for my own welfare. When with my free will I believe God about God, hope for God relying on God, love God on account of God, then it is in immediate conformity not with right reason, the image of God, but with God Himself. In faith, I freely conform my intellect with God's intellect and receive supernatural knowledge of God. In hope, besides this, I partially conform my will to God's will and kindness and power and

fidelity to His promises, and accept from God happiness and the means of attaining it. In love or charity, besides believing and hoping, my will clings to God as good in Himself and rests in Him and gives myself to Him and does not look to receiving knowledge or happiness or anything from Him. The immediate conformity of my soul with God as my immediate standard is great in faith, greater in hope, and greatest in charity or love. Prudence or actual natural right reason about things to be done or desired by me as morally good, makes me a greater image and likeness of God than does the mere possession of the power to act according to right reason. Faith makes me more like to God than does natural prudence. Hope makes me His more perfect image still, and charity makes me His *most* perfect image.

We have been speaking so far of kinds or classes of virtues. A soul may make more *intense* and more *frequent* acts of faith, hope or charity and thus become a proportionately more perfect image and likeness of God.

In heaven God is not believed in but seen, and faith gives way to sight. There He is not expected but possessed and hope gives way to fruition. But there He is still loved and loved continuously and most intensely as seen and possessed, as most close to my intellect and will. In heaven my soul thus becomes the most godlike, my intellect and my memory and my will the most like to the intellect and memory and will of God. In heaven my soul thus becomes the most perfect possible image and likeness of God.

Besides, we must recall that every one who is justified receives the gift of habitual or sanctifying grace which makes him a sharer of the divine nature.

From these explanations we see that in creation God makes us His natural image and likeness by the powers then bestowed and in justification God makes us His supernatural image and likeness. Some have seen in the words of the Holy Scriptures a distinction between image and likeness and understand from them that God in creation stamps on us the natural light of His countenance and in justification stamps on us that which is supernatural. In these two acts He does these two things whether they are indicated or not in the words of Genesis.

Well, the Lutherans and Calvinists denied that our souls are ever sanctified intrinsically, that sanctifying grace ever blots out and destroys original sin or actual sin as to their guilt. They maintained that we are not God's natural image in creation or His supernatural image in justification. For these gifts and with them I can easily love God.

After recalling these elements, we go on with our catechism. Why did God make you? That I might know Him and love Him and serve Him in this life and be forever happy with Him in the next. As we know, the essential happiness of heaven consists in the knowledge and love of God and in the joy of possessing Him in this knowledge and love.

Therefore, when God sanctifies us, what is the chief act for which He prepares us by sanctifying us? It is to love Him supernaturally here on earth and hereafter in heaven. And when He creates us, what is the chief act for which He prepares us by creating us? To love Him naturally here on earth.

He gave us eyes to see and ears to hear and hearts to beat and lungs to breathe. And He gave us understanding, memory, and will to know Him and love Him. How well our eyes and ears and heart and lungs are made by Him. In their making how apt they are for seeing, hearing, beating, breathing. Are not our intellects and wills made equally apt to know and love God?

The catechism continues: Of which should you take more care, of your body or of your soul? Of my soul. Why? Because my soul is a spirit and made to the image and likeness of God and can never die.

If it is the command of God that we take more care of our soul than of our body, does He not practise Himself what He thus preaches to us? Does He not take more care of our souls than He does of our bodies? He tells us, fear not him who can kill the body but can not harm the soul. But fear Him who can destroy both soul and body into hell fire. If your right hand scandalize you, be a stumbling block, an occasion of sin, lop it off and cast it from you. If your eye scandalize you, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better to enter heaven having one hand or one eye than having two hands and two eyes to be cast into Gehenna of fire. What

doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and to suffer any harm to his soul?

He created us that we might be perfectly happy, not here in this world, but with Him forever in the next. He did not take flesh and live and die and neither does He send the Holy Spirit to us, that we may have health and strength and beauty and abundance and long life, but that we may be holy here and save our souls hereafter.

And yet what care He takes of our bodies. As He tells us, He opens His hand and fills every animal with blessings. He feeds the little ones of the ravens. Two tiny sparrows are sold for a farthing and yet not one falls to the ground without His leave. He clothes the lily of the field that neither sows nor spins and yet not Solomon in all his glory was arrayed in such beauty as one of these. He hath care of the grass which is to-day and to-morrow is thrown into the oven. We are the sheep of His own pasture and He sees to it that nothing is wanting to us. Every hair of our head is numbered by Him.

Not only did He adapt our eyes, ears, hearts, and lungs to seeing, hearing, beating, breathing, but what abundance of light, air, water, and food He supplies that each one of these organs may perform its proper function! And since our mind and will, made and adapted to know and love Him, need His natural or supernatural lights and fires, does He not give us graces more abundant than the lights of the sun and moon and stars and than the air and than the waters of our springs and rivers and than the fruits of the earth?

Else how would He be taking more care of our souls than He does of our bodies, how would He be a better provider for our souls?

Well, let the Jansenists follow Luther and Calvin and say that God did not make me to His own image and likeness, and that He does not when He sanctifies me clothe my soul with a snow-white robe adorned with jewels, each one sparkling with the light of His face and its beauty. And then let them say that there is no power in my mind and will to know and love God. But I know by reason and by faith that God did make and sanctify me to His own image and likeness that I might know Him and love Him and that it is natural for my

spirit to love Him and that it is therefore easy and common among all who have good will to give glory to God by loving Him.

How ennobling it is to a soul to thus know that it is easy to love God!

Further on we will hear the Holy Doctors explaining how God gives us interior natural and supernatural powers to know and love Him and how He gives us abundant individual helps to exercise these powers. According to St. Thomas and St. Francis de Sales and others, because He wished acts of love to be not only possible but easy, He gave us intelligence by which we easily know the truth of God's existence and goodness, and a will by which we easily love our supreme goodness, and when He sanctifies us by His habitual grace He gives us an interior permanent power enabling and inclining us to love Him supernaturally. And this infused virtue of charity is, according to St. Thomas, the most active and in its exercise the most delectable of all the powers of our soul. Moreover, He gives His actual graces inclining us to love Him in the greatest abundance to every soul, even to the self-hardened and self-blinded. He thus reaches from end to end mightily and disposes all things sweetly by His wise and kind providence to man. He made the fishes that they might swim and the birds that they might fly; and He therefore gave them powers to swim and fly, and besides an abundance of air and water to propel their fins and wings. And He made each human being to know and love Him naturally, and when He sanctifies him He does so that he may love Him supernaturally. To love God is as special to man as to swim or fly is special to the bird or fish. And if it were impossible or hard for man to love God, it ought to be impossible or hard also for the fish or bird to swim or fly.

I am a Catholic only ordinarily well informed and pious and logical. But I readily gather these fruits for my own soul from the points for meditation which have been placed under my eyes in the texts and considerations of the preceding chapters.

I have recalled the words of the first chapter of my child's catechism. I now take up my prayer-book and in the Ordinary of the Mass I read the Nicene Creed. I see in the first

article: "I believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible." This is to be said by every Catholic and the Catholic religion is the one only true religion, and Our Lord, who is the one true God and Sovereign Lord of every human being, rigorously commands every human being to embrace this religion for the sanctification and salvation of His soul. Thus, as I see, this *Credo* ought to be said by every human being who has attained the use of reason. Each of its articles is God's own truth taught for each human soul.

Likewise the Our Father is taught by Our Lord to be said as a prayer by all. It is given directly as a prayer and as the rule of praying. But this rule of praying, this *lex orandi*, fixes also the rule of believing, the *lex credendi*. And this rule of praying regulates not only our faith but also all of our desires, lays down not only what things we should desire but in what order, what we should ask and desire in the first place and what in the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh. It thus is the rule not only of praying and not only of believing but also of hoping and loving.

Then the first article of the *Credo* and the first petition of the *Pater*, or rather its first word, which animates each one of all the seven petitions, place before me God as my Father or rather as the Father of each living human being. And if I believe in God as our Father according to the *Credo*, and pray to Him as our Father according to the *Pater*, there is nothing impossible or hard in my loving Him above all things for His own sake. There is nothing impossible or hard in my fulfilling the greatest and first commandment if I will only say in my heart the first words of the *Credo* and *Pater*.

The next part of the *Credo* refers to our Divine Redeemer. "And in the One Lord, Jesus Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God, and born of the Father before all ages, God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, consubstantial to the Father, by whom all things were made, who *for us* men and *for our* salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnated of the Holy Ghost from the Virgin Mary, and was made man, was also crucified *for us*, suffered under Pontius Pilate, died and was buried, and rose again on the third day and ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of



God the Father Almighty whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.”

Here each one of the first series of clauses tells me how great and worthy of all love Our Lord is in Himself. And each one of the second series tells me what great things Our Lord has done and suffered or what great things He will do, for me, out of love for me.

All these great things are for *us* men, and for *our* salvation, for *us*, for *every* soul without exception. As I thus see, God is certainly the loving Father and also the loving Redeemer of each soul and certainly also of myself. How easy for me, believing firmly in each one of these clauses, not only to love my loving Father and Redeemer, but also to love each fellow-child of God our Father, each fellow-brother of God our Redeemer! How easy for me to keep the first commandment of love for God and the second commandment, like unto the first, of love for my neighbor as myself for God's sake, of my neighbor whom they love so much. For the terms “Father,” “for us,” “for us men and for our salvation,” are absolutely universal and admit of no exception whatsoever.

After the part about Our Lord comes that about the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, “And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, and the giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who together with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified.”

As I here see, how infinitely great is the Holy Spirit and how worthy not only of adoration by the virtue of religion but also of glorification by the exercise of the virtue of charity or love for God, and He is called without any limitation the Vivifier or Giver of Life. I see here no indication that His graces are given to few or meagerly. And I know from the explanations by the Church that “He gives them to each one abundantly,” according to the phrase of the Angel of the Schools. Again, how easy for me, believing this article about the Third Person, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son by their infinite eternal love for each other, and who is so worthy of all love and who is so loving as to be ever standing at the door of each soul and knocking and crying out to be permitted to enter into it in person and to sanctify it and

save it—how easy it is for me to love the Holy Spirit and to love each soul so loved by Him!

As I go on in the Creed, I believe in "One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church." My soul immediately thanks and loves God for the gift of such a rich, mighty, holy, wise, beautiful, tender Mother. Her indefectibility from the time of the apostles to the consummation of the world images God's eternity, her catholicity images God's immensity, her sanctity images God's Sanctity and her unity images His Charity by which her founder is one with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and they are one with Him. What love for mankind, to have made and preserved and assisted the Church to teach our souls sacred truths, to feed them through the sacraments, to guide them by the authority of wise and kind laws! What love for me, to have given me faith in all that she believes and teaches as truth revealed by God! How easy for me to know from her the fulness of truth about the goodness of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost and to know it without admixture of error and without fear of mistake. And therefore how easy for me to love God.

Then follow the articles: "I confess one baptism for the remission of sins and I expect the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come." Here I see that my sins may be most fully remitted by Baptism. But I know that afterward by Penance, by this sacrament of mercy received really or in desire, my sins may be fully remitted even though they be as scarlet in their malice and as the sands of the seashore in their number. And I know that they may be thus remitted no matter how often I relapse or how long I have put off my return to my Father who is ever waiting and ready to welcome the prodigal home and again make him His heir. Did He not welcome the return of the penitent thief who was drawing his last breath on the death-bed of his cross?

I believe not only in Baptism, but in each one of the seven sacraments, each one of them not only a sign but also a cause, a copious channel of grace to my soul. And tender Mother Church administers them according to her own loving maxim, "*sacramenta propter homines*," the sacraments are for men, not angels, but beings who are human, weak, sinful.

And I believe also in the resurrection and in heaven and in

the incomprehensible communication there to me of God's own beatitude.

If I am a Catholic thus knowing God's goodness, why should it be hard for me to love? Why not, therefore, leave the impossibility or difficulty and rareness of love for God to those who will not say this *Credo* or will not understand it with the Church?

The agnostic says: "I know nothing about God." The infidel says: "I do not believe in God." The Calvinists, Lutherans, and Jansenists make out God the Father as one who is not a Father, not loving.

They represent Him as creating each soul since Adam's fall without reason to know Him or free will to love Him. He created only a few to receive faith and love. He created the great number to be damned, not consequently but antecedently to their sins and final impenitence. If I believed that He had created only one to be thus damned I would see that such a purpose made Him cruel and unjust and not infinitely perfect and deserving of all love, but worthy of all execration and abomination. What reason would I then see for loving my neighbor as myself? I would not be sure that God created him to be saved, wishes well to him, loves him.

According to the Calvinists, Lutherans, and Jansenists, Christ died not for all but only for a few. Suppose that by hysteria I could work myself up into the belief that God created *me* as one of the few, that Christ died for *me* as one of the few. Then I could not help remembering their cruelty, meanness, stinginess, to the vast multitude of my equally needy kin. How could I then love God or Christ, both of them so cruel, mean, stingy?

Lutherans, Calvinists, and Jansenists agree that God creates man not only without the power to know Him, but also without free will, without the power to choose moral good and reject moral evil. Moreover, according to them, concupiscence, with which each man is created, inclines him so as to overpower him to choose evil. Actual grace or an interior, supernatural inclination to will good is given to only a few. It is supernatural or above man's natural power and is grace, or favor, and is not due from God to man in virtue of God creating man and in virtue of man's nature. In God's giving

man human nature there is not included a promise or debt from God to give man grace. The cause of a cause is the cause of the thing caused, when the second cause acts not freely but necessarily. Without grace man by concupiscence necessarily, simply, and definitively wills evil and with grace he in the same way wills good. In each case he is overpowered; in the first case by concupiscence, in the second by grace, in each by a cause placed by God and acting necessarily. It is, therefore, good logic to say that God is responsible not only for the good but also for the evil act of man's will.

As we saw recorded in the anathema of the Council of Trent, Luther accepted this conclusion and boasted of it and said God was as much the author of the treason of Judas as of the conversion of Paul. Whether the Jansenists thus openly blasphemed God's sanctity or not, they all insisted on the maxims from which this blasphemy immediately follows. They all asserted that the graces of God are always overpowering, that man's will never dissents from them, that every grace is efficacious and none merely sufficient, that when man does what is right he is interiorly necessitated by grace; that when he does what is wrong, it is because he has received no grace from God to do what is right.

If God is granted to be thus the author of sin, sinful, unholy, wicked, it is incomprehensible that any one who is sane can think of loving the responsible cause of all the crimes and enormities which have degraded men.

Well, we know that Cain freely murdered his brother Abel. The Lord said to Cain:

"Why art thou angry? And why is thy countenance fallen? If thou do well, shalt thou not receive? but if ill, shall not sin be present at thy door? but the *lust thereof* shall be under thee and thou shalt have dominion over it." (Gen. iv. 7.)

And every other sin or crime recorded in the Holy Scriptures is condemned as a sin or crime only on condition that it was an act of free will.

The denial of free will is so manifestly absurd that it was happily soon abandoned even theoretically by the masses of the Lutherans and Calvinists. Not one of them ever pretended to carry this absurd maxim into a court of justice in a criminal

suit. We may meet some doctrinaire materialist physicians who loudly preach this absurdity. We will never meet one who does not contradict such words by his actions, and blame some evil acts of men—and blameworthiness is express affirmation of free will. They even blame us for blaming them for speaking thus foolishly.

But let us suppose that some one despises this absurdity in all political affairs and yet embraces it in theology and in his dealings with God. Let us suppose that his mind is tainted even with a slight suspicion that this Lutheran, Calvinistic, Jansenistic maxim may be true, that God may be the responsible author of all the sins of man in thought, word, deed, or omission. Well, love for such a god will be impossible for him.

However, I scorn this absurdity. Therefore it is no reason for my believing that love for God is impossible or hard.

Again, we Catholics have always held that there is a world-wide difference between mortal and venial sin. In our science of morality this difference has even been regarded as a fundamental principle from which follow countless practical doctrines. As we have seen, the puritanical schools of Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Jansenism have constantly denied that any sins are by their nature only venial and they have constantly affirmed that all are mortal. Thus God is grievously offended by each venial sin, breaks off friendship for each venial sin, withdraws His sanctifying grace for the first venial sin or at least each venial sin by its nature merits this penalty. And he who is resolved to continue to commit even one kind of venial sin is not a friend of God, can not then be loving God for His own sake above all things. We will study this matter fully in a special chapter. For the present let it suffice to point out the bearing of this anti-Catholic doctrine on the difficulty of loving God. One who is so touchy as to be ready to break off his friendship for me, and to hate me as a mortal enemy and to inflict extreme penalties on me for slight transgressions of which I know I am and will be frequently guilty—such a one is impossible or hard for me to love as a friend. Those puritans held that God is thus touchy. I know that He is not. I do not accept their false and absurd premises. Why should I agree with them in their conclusion that love

for God for His own sake above all things is impossible or even hard and rare for me?

Again, each one of the aforesaid puritanical schools taught that God commands things impossible for even the just who try their best, and for even the just who receive the greatest abundance of graces given to men in our present state. What a tyrant, worthy of all hate He is thus represented to be! This was the only doctrine on this point known by the late Robert Ingersoll to have been taught by Christians. It was consistent in him to hold up to public execration God thus misrepresented as a giant spider weaving webs of laws to catch human flies. But we do not take our concept of God commanding from Ingersoll or the puritans, whether they were outside the Church's pale with Lutheranism or Calvinism, or inside with Jansenism. The Councils and Popes with St. Augustine teach that God does not command impossibilities, and St. Jerome exclaims, "Cursed be the man who says that God commands impossibilities!"

And with St. John we know that none of our Lord's commands is heavy. And Our Lord Himself, who tells us that the command to love God is the greatest and first, also tells us that His yoke is sweet and His burden light.

Those three puritanical schools taught that the commandment to love God, that this one commandment specifically and especially is impossible for any man to fulfil.

As we see, as Catholics and as reasonable beings endowed with common sense, we must reject the aforesaid blasphemous maxims which misrepresent God as an execrable tyrant. Why, then, should we accept their pet conclusion that love for God is impossible or hard for us?

From time immemorial the following has been accepted among Catholics as a self-evident and fundamental maxim: "*A præcepto ad posse valet illatio*"—"From a command to the possibility of the act commanded, valid is the inference." The reason of this maxim is manifest. No human authority has any right to command an act which is impossible, and no reasonable superior ever issues any order to do a thing which is impossible for the subject ordered to do it. A precept to an individual or class of individuals or a law for a region or territory and for all who are of that place and whom it may

concern, must be reasonable; and to be reasonable must be possible. The following is the definition of a law according to St. Thomas: "*Ordinatio rationis ad bonum commune ab eo qui habet potestatem*"—"An ordering of reason for the common welfare by him who has authority." Reasonableness is thus the first word and concept of a law. As St. Thomas often observes, a law which is not reasonable is null, is no law, is tyranny. We expect that every human law will be at least so far reasonable as to command only what is possible. We know that God is essential Reason or Wisdom. We thus know that He does not command impossibilities, that the fact that He commands an act manifests that the act is possible, and that from His commanding an act there is a valid inference that such act is possible to those to whom He commands it.

Luther, Calvin, and the Jansenists repeatedly denied that such an inference is valid and often expressly denied it with regard to the greatest and first commandment in particular. I will strain my mind for a moment to place myself at their point of view. I will grant for the sake of argument that love for God as enjoined in the great commandment is impossible. I will consider God issuing this command through Moses and through Our Lord. I will consider God at the same time knowing this act of love to be impossible. Now, not with Luther and company, but with all the human race in its sound senses, I see that the inference from the command to the possibility of the thing commanded is not only valid but necessary. I thus see God as represented by them deceiving us all by issuing such a command, as literally acting a lie. It is consistent in Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Jansenism to teach that it is impossible or hard to love with my whole heart a being who is a deliberate liar. But I could never for a moment let such a blasphemous thought cross my mind. I do not accept their cause of the act of love being impossible or hard. Why should I hesitate in rejecting the logical effect of this cause? Why should I follow them as teachers that the act of love is impossible or hard?

We have seen how Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Jansenism and Quietism and Semi-Quietism taught that he who enters into the state of love must leave all hope behind and not only

all hope for God's rewards but also all fear of His punishments and all detestation of sins on account of their native turpitude and all love for the virtues on account of their intrinsic beauty and loveliness. However, we have seen that, in truth, love for God because He is good does not exclude any of the motives of the inferior virtues. Indeed, love does not necessarily think of punishments, and as we grow in love we also grow in hope or confidence of receiving good things from Him whom we regard as more and more friendly to us. And in this sense a more perfect degree of love expels, or tends to expel, from our heart fear of punishments from our friend. Yet, as we have seen, each one of the inferior virtues prepares us and disposes us to love God because He is good. And if we leave out fear of punishments, love for God not only prepares and disposes, but commands us to practise the inferior virtues more perfectly than we could without love for God. As St. Thomas teaches, no one of these virtues is a virtue simply and perfectly until thus influenced and motived also by love for God. According to those puritanical schools, before I can love God I must tear out of my soul my inclination to happiness and to these inferior virtues. Thus I must tear out my very rational nature. As we have seen with the guidance of the Church, we are not required to do any one of these irrational acts in order to love God. We deny these false suppositions. Why should we accept their conclusions that love for God because He is good is impossible or hard?

The reader may begin to be weary of having his mind kept so long fixed on so many absurdities so somber and gloomy and saddening. Many feel that they did not need to be shown by us that the logical foundations of the error that love for God is impossible or hard are so absurd on their face to any one who will think for himself. Well, we can not help insisting on one more absurdity, at which we know not whether to weep or to laugh.

As we have seen, Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Jansenism all affirm that acts of love are hard. They so explain what love is, that if it were this, it must be hard and even impossible. They so represent God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost that we should execrate them and can not love them. They teach that we have not either in our



natural powers of reason and free will or in supernatural powers given us by God's graces the means necessary for loving God. How painful or ludicrous it is to hear them *after all this*, absurdly proclaiming an exaggerated *necessity* of loving God and *that in every one of our deliberate acts*.

Catholic doctrine all along the line makes the act of love easy, whether we consider the act in itself or in Father, Son, or Holy Ghost represented as infinitely lovable objects of the act or in human nature and grace as proximate, efficient causes of the act. If Catholic doctrine, then, taught the great necessity or frequent obligation of loving God we would find some consistency. But strange as it may appear, Catholic doctrine, after teaching that acts of love are easy, adds that these acts are not so necessary as means of justification and salvation and are rarely necessary for fulfilling the divine precept. And each one of these puritanical schools, after teaching that love is impossible or hard, adds that it is required by God in every deliberate act of our will, at every moment of our rational life. Luther, Calvin, Baius, Jansenius, Quesnel, and the pseudo-synod of Pistoia all agree against the Church that between charity in the proper sense and vicious cupidity, there is no mean, no intermediate good act, and that thus every act not elicited by love for God arises from evil cupidity and is sinful. The above statement of their position is extracted by us from the theology of the Wircebergenses on the theological virtues, paragraph 290. There also are found citations substantiating this statement as a historic fact. Of course the Wircebergenses here in no way differ from other Catholic theologians in their exposition of the tenets of these heresies. We will not weary the reader by rehearsing documents already cited by us on this point.

What is the parallel Catholic doctrine? We are obliged to fulfil the divine commandment of loving God with our whole heart. By this commandment we are forbidden to hate God or to ever do anything grievously displeasing to our Friend whom we are bound to love. By it we are positively commanded to elicit positive acts of love for God above all things. How often? The Holy See has defined that we would not fulfil this commandment if we elicited such an act only once in our lifetime, or once in every five years. How much oftener

we are obliged by the precept, theologians do not agree. With St. Thomas and theologians more commonly, we hold that when we act deliberately we ought to wish to act according to right reason and our rational nature. Thus, if we eat or drink we must have our mind made up to do so according to the virtue of temperance. This is enough for the act to be morally good. Must we think about God in every such deliberate act? It is better to do so as frequently as we can. But given our human infirmity it is impossible to do so continuously. Thence, as St. Thomas teaches, God neither commands nor counsels us to *think* of Him in each act as God neither commands nor counsels impossibilities. Much less does God command or counsel us to *love* Him in each individual act. He does counsel or invite us to love Him frequently and to tend to imitate the state of heaven, where we will love Him intensely and unceasingly. We can refer an act to God from the motive of hope or fear, etc., and without the motive of love for God because He is good. If at any moment we are in the state of mortal sin and are then bound to be justified and then have no other means of being justified but the act of love, then we are bound to an act of love as a means of justification, and not merely as a matter of precept.

Such is the Catholic doctrine in outline. It will be explained more fully further on. When we see how unexact-ing our Infinite Creditor is with regard to the great debt of love which He has made so easy for us to pay, is He not for this all the more lovable, and is it not thence easier for us to be willing and glad to pay it early and often?

Many of the Lutherans, Calvinists, and Jansenists were highly endowed with talent, learning, and culture. Their puritanism was long fashionable in many places. It is out of the fashion now both outside and inside the Church. Many a reader, whether Catholic or non-Catholic, when asked if he believes that acts of love for God are impossible or hard and rare, will reply: "At least I won't believe so for Luther, Calvin, or Jansenius." Many a loyal son or daughter of the Church has believed that love is hard and rare. These will be indignant to find that they had been duped into their false belief by the Church's enemies and that they had been thus duped by reasons all of them unsolid, many of them silly,

and many cruel and blasphemous. Cardinal Billot had told them that the belief was a mere prejudice and a remnant of Jansenism. Canon Berardi had told them that the belief is surely false and that Jansenism at least had much to do in originating and fostering it. The reader can now judge this error not only from such authorities but also from his own common sense.

As we read in "Studies in Church History," Vol. IV, page 135, by the late Reuben Parsons, Voltaire called the Jansenist a fool, an energumen, harsh, cruel, barbarous, factious, rebellious, who would burn common sense in the Place de Grève. Horace thus begins his epistle on the poetic art, "If a painter should join a horse's neck to a human head and spread various feathers over limbs borrowed from every animal, or if a woman beautiful above should terminate unseemingly in a black fish, could you restrain your laughter, my friends, when admitted to such a sight? Believe me, ye Pisos, that a book would resemble that picture whose confused ideas would be devised like the dreams of a sick man, so that neither foot nor head could be assigned to one species!"

Such is Jansenism. Should we weep or laugh at our own folly in having been led by such folly to believe that love for God is hard or impossible?

## CHAPTER X

### LOVE FOR GOD IS NATURAL FOR MEN AND WOMEN OF GOOD WILL

THE above proposition is to be demonstrated in this chapter. What is the meaning here attached by us to the term "natural"? It is not taken as opposed to "supernatural." We do not hold that acts of love for God above all things for His own sake are easy for our intelligence and will unaided by Almighty God's interior supernatural graces illumining our mind and inflaming our affections. However, as will be explained in a special chapter, these graces are always present or easily had.

Neither do we imply by our use of the word "natural" that each man of good will is necessitated to elicit the act of love by an instinct like that moving the bee to make honey or the beaver to build his dam. Much less do we contend for the existence of a natural force moving the soul like gravitation does the stone or magnetism the needle of the compass.

It is a fundamental maxim that the act of faith is free. The act of hope is impossible and inconceivable without previous faith, and, moreover, it is principally in the will and thus is more manifestly free than the act of faith, which is principally in the intelligence. Without both faith and hope having gone before, supernatural love or friendship for God is impossible and inconceivable. We can not desire the unknown, and the divine goodness loved in charity is known supernaturally by faith. Charity is the *mutual* love of *friendship* and this singular friendship of man toward God is founded on God's loving communication of His own divine beatitude to us. As has often been said, this communication is not the moral cause immediately moving our will to love God. This cause or motive is the infinite goodness, it is God infinitely good in Himself and for His own sake worthy of our chief love. We do not love God as a friend *for* this communication, but we would not and could not love Him as a *friend without* it. It is thus not the cause of love, and yet is its condition *sine qua non*. However, this promised communi-

cation of the divine beatitude is a cause or formal motive of *hope*. Without both faith and hope there is no love. With them both there yet may not be love, and we are still free to love God or not to love Him. They prepare, dispose, impel, urge, but do not command and decisively move us to love. Charity commands faith and hope and all other virtues, but neither faith nor hope nor any moral virtue commands charity. Faith is free, hope is more manifestly free and charity is still more manifestly free. The tribute of the gold of love is commanded by God and rewarded by Him as meritorious, as worthy of recompense, and no act is commanded and rewarded by a reasonable being unless that act be free. In heaven we see God's beauty face to face and possess Him, and there our wills are necessitated, overpowered to love Him. But here we see Him only through the luminous cloud of His testimony about His own beauty. This cloud is luminous, but still it is a cloud, and our faith views Him through it only darkly and indirectly, and our hope regards Him as far off and hard to reach, and they can not necessitate our love. These are some of the reasons why we could not mean that love for God is necessitated when we say it is natural.

Tertullian, comparing the pagan superstition that there are many gods and the Christian belief in the one God, says that the human soul is seen to be naturally Christian from the fact that when suddenly overtaken by danger or misfortune men spontaneously cry out for help to God and not to the gods. Similarly we mean that every one who has good will has a strong propensity or inclination to love God above all things for His own sake, and that this propensity makes love easy for Him.

What do we mean by men of good will? Such as have the will or resolve to do what is good and right, to fulfil their duties or obligations as far as they see or know them, to keep the commandments, to serve God. We distinguish three degrees of good will. A will may resolve to serve God so as to avoid all mortal sin, or all mortal and venial sin, or all mortal and venial sin and all imperfection. The rich young man in the gospel had kept the commandments from his youth, had avoided mortal sin at least habitually. Let us suppose that Jesus looking on him loved him for being also habitually

resolved to do all things commanded even under pain of venial sin. After this he received a special invitation from Our Lord, who said, "If you will be perfect, go sell all you have and give it to the poor and you will have a treasure in heaven, and come and follow Me." Here it was more perfect to quit all wealth and follow Our Lord; and yet it was not commanded to this young man either by the general law or by Our Lord individually. Our Lord said only, "if you wish to be perfect, come." In this case there was a question of two states of life, both of them good but one of them better, more pleasing to God, more perfect. Similarly there may be question of two particular acts, both of them good but one of them more perfect. There are some holy souls who are habitually resolved to choose the more perfect course wherever they see it to be such.

We now come back to our proposition. According to these explanations the following is its meaning. All who are resolved to avoid mortal sin have a strong propensity to love God. In those resolved to avoid venial sin the propensity is stronger. And in those resolved to avoid also imperfections the propensity is stronger still. The original reformers, Luther, Calvin, etc., denied the distinction and difference between precepts and counsels. The Jansenists granted this distinction and difference, but with Luther, Calvin, etc., denied the distinction and difference between venial and mortal sin and maintained that all sins by their nature are mortal. Consistently they would not grant that we can love God above all things while resolved to continue in habits of venial sin. In a special chapter we will show that the will to commit venial sin does not exclude the will loving God above all things for His own sake, or perfect contrition, which remits sin without the actual reception of a Christian sacrament. For the present we take for granted the Catholic doctrine on the difference between counsels and precepts, and between mortal and venial sin and the common teaching of theologians that unwillingness to follow counsels or to avoid venial sin does not exclude love for God above all things for His own sake.

He who wills to do what is right, to fulfil a duty or obligation, to serve God, to keep a divine commandment, wills to do that which honors God and which is known to honor God.

He thus wishes a good to God, and to wish a good to a person is to love him. Thus in a broad sense, all good will is love for God, and is often called love for God, and even charity toward God, by St. Augustine. However, it is not the same to will a thing known to honor God and to will that same thing merely and solely *because* it honors God. In the latter case there is pure love for God. In the former there may not be. We may will that which honors God because we fear divine punishments if we do not will it. Then there is an act of fear which manifestly is not an act of pure or disinterested love. We may will to shun mortal sin from fear of hell, venial sin from fear of falling into mortal sin or from fear of purgatory, imperfections from fear of losing God's abundant graces or consolations and thence by little and little falling into venial and mortal sin and subsequently into purgatory or hell. Thus we may have a certain will even to avoid all imperfections and yet not love God.

The scope of this chapter requires us to dwell on the explanation of this point. We read in the Council of Trent, session 14, chapter 4, "Contrition, which holds the first place among the said acts of the penitent, is sorrow and detestation in the soul for sin committed with the purpose of not sinning anew." Instead of contrition let us for convenience use the word "penance." Here there is described generic and not specific penance. "Animal" is generic; "rational animal," or "man," is specific, a species. Generic animality is determined by the difference "rationality." Generic penance likewise may be determined by the motive peculiar to a specific virtue. We read in Palmieri on Penance, page 27:

"1. It may be determined from the special motive of charity, from the goodness of God loved for Himself, to which goodness sin is opposed.

"2. It may be determined from the motive of hope or from the beatitude which we hope for from God, the attainment of which beatitude is hindered or retarded by whatsoever sin.

"3. To this belongs also the motive of servile fear, which is evil inflicted by God whether temporal in this life or the other, or especially eternal. Either the one or the other is menaced by God for whatsoever sin.

"4. It may be determined from the motive of religion which is the worship due to God in signification of His excellence and protestation of our subjection. For all sins are opposed to the divine worship.

Divine worship is honor shown to God by certain acts signifying our subjection and God's excellence. And inasmuch as worship is honor shown to God and by it we signify our subjection and the divine excellence it is opposed by whatsoever sin, whatsoever dishonor of God.

"5. It may be determined by the motive of obedience which is the moral goodness in observing the divine law and to which whatsoever sin is manifestly opposed.

"6. It may be determined from the motive of gratitude due to God on account of benefits received to which gratitude whatsoever sin is opposed.

"As is manifest, the virtues constituted by these motives, or formal objects, are not formal penance. These virtues may exist even though no sin exist. The will may be borne to each one of the motives as a good and may flee and abhor the evil opposed to this good. Thus from love for any of these motives it may hate the offense of God committed by itself and opposed to them and may will not to commit it again. This is an act of salutary penance. Moreover, it is formal penance. For it is formally hate of the offense of God (which offense is opposed to the motives of these virtues) and it is a purpose of not sinning anew. According to the Council of Trent this act is a formal act of contrition and therefore of that penance which is commended by the Church. And each of these motives is universal and holds for whatsoever sin. Therefore the will can by one act on account of these motives detest whatsoever sins."

Besides these universal virtues there are others which are only particular. Taken strictly by themselves they are not opposed to every sin. Thus one may be resolved to be temperate in eating and drinking and yet not have sorrow and detestation for all the sins he has committed with the purpose of not committing any sin in the future. One may be temperate in eating and drinking and yet be a blasphemer, a dishonorer of parents, a murderer, a thief, an adulterer, a calumniator.

Let us again come back to the proposition at the head of this chapter. By a man or woman of good will we here mean one who is determined with the help of God's graces to avoid *all* mortal sin from any one of the just enumerated and described universal motives. We are now ready for a further explanation of the word "natural." Suppose the following case: A human subject is resolved to do the will of his human superior. His resolve is based on the special motive of hope of rewards, or fear of punishments, or honor



due, or obedience, or gratitude. He knows and reflects that this human superior is well-nigh perfect and loves him so much that he longs for his company and has made him his universal heir. Any one of experience sees and feels that such is the nature of these virtues and such is human nature that any human subject *will* have a strong propensity to love such a human superior as a friend, with the pure love of friendship. This is the sense in which we say that in every man of good will, love for God is natural, is natural for him provided he have good will, and no matter on which one of those motives it be based.

Some who have given little thought to the difference between the various virtues may be tempted to suspect that we are splitting hairs when we distinguish obedience to God, gratitude to God, religion toward God from love for God for His own sake. Palmieri and others add the special virtue of penance "which derives its motive from the intrinsic nature of sin as an offense and injury to God who has the essential right that He receive honor from His rational creatures and that His will be done to which injury there is a consequent debt to make compensation or satisfaction. Thus sin, as it is an offense of God, to be expiated as far as possible by acts of the penitent sinner, may be the object of formal penance and such penance is a special virtue."

The possibility of the above suspicion was one of the causes that prompted us to state these distinctions in the words of the late Father Palmieri. He here follows St. Thomas. Tanquerey, the illustrious Sulpician, gives the same distinctions and definitions in his "Briefer Synopsis of Moral Theology," p. 367, sq. He thus manifests that he considers these distinctions as rudimentary and as commonly admitted by theologians, and this is true and a fact.

That fear and hope are different from charity, no one could hesitate in granting.

All may be willing to obey a bishop, pastor, father rector, mother superior, president, governor, mayor, judge, general, captain, serving not only to the eye but from the heart and for conscience' sake, although he does not love and even hates or despises the individual who has legitimate authority and commands. The Christians were told by the apostles thus

to obey Nero. Obedience is therefore not necessarily love, much less does it include love of friendship.

Gratitude is pure disinterested love, but it is not love of friendship.

Religion is not charity toward God. St. Thomas and theologians commonly, say it is a part of the virtue of justice.

"All the precepts of the decalogue pertain to justice." 2. 2. q. 122, a. 1.

"Religion is the virtue by which men render the worship and reverence *due* to God." 2. 2. q. 81, a. 1.

"Religion is a special virtue distinct from the others, since by it special honor is rendered to God." 2. 2. 81, a. 4.

"As God is rather the end [perhaps terminus?] than the object or matter of religion, it hence follows that religion is a moral and not a theological virtue." 2. 2. 81, a. 5.

"As religion of all moral virtues approaches the most closely to God, it is also necessarily the most excellent of them all." 2. 2. q. 81, a. 6.

"Devotion is a certain special act of a will prompt and ready to do whatsoever pertains to the service and honor of God." 2. 2. q. 82, a. 1.

"It is an act of religion." 2. 2. q. 82, a. 2.

The radical cause of religion not being a theological virtue is that its immediate conformity is with right reason as its rule or standard, whereas the immediate conformity of faith, hope, and charity is with God as their rule or standard. Moreover, religion looks on God as a most excellent creditor and on ourselves as debtors obliged to pay the just debt of worship and reverence. Willingness to pay a just debt does not include love of friendship for our creditor though known to be worthy of such friendship. Elsewhere St. Thomas teaches that charity or love of friendship for God commands all the other virtues and gives to each its ultimate or highest perfection, that no one of them is simply perfect without charity. Religion is willing to render due worship and reverence to God. Devotion is not only willing but prompt. Charity is not only willing but glad and thus most willing and prompt. Thus religion and devotion are at their best only when moved by love.

So much has been said to make it plain that none of these virtues is charity, that none of them has as its immediate motive God infinitely good in Himself.

Since we have been lastly speaking of the motive of religion,

we will straightway finish all that we have to say of it with reference to our proposition. Suppose this case. Some one has sorrow and detestation for sin committed, with the purpose of not sinning anew, from the motive of religion. He then easily reflects that God is good and loving. Then it is natural for him to love God above all things for His own sake. This conclusion is manifest to any one who has seized the preceding explanations of human nature and the nature of religion.

We may here dispose very briefly of the part of our proposition referring to gratitude. Why is it that oftentimes gratitude toward a human benefactor is not accompanied or followed by love of friendship? We leave out the case of the soul depraved by pride or false magnanimity which looks on the receiving of a favor as galling inferiority and on a benefactor as a hateful superior. This viperous satanic disposition is abnormal. It is normal human nature to look from the good gift to the good giver. Yet many a human giver is seen to love us only enough to make that gift and do no more for us and he is seen to be not heartily loving toward us. Moreover, he is often seen not to be in himself worthy of our friendship in the full sense of that term. However, the divine benefactor is seen to be the opposite, all along the line. Each one of His benefits naturally awakens in us a sense of His infinite goodness and of His ineffable lovingness toward us. In fact, his benefits are the only means of our knowing His goodness and lovingness. Then suppose the case of one who has sorrow and detestation for his sins with the purpose of not sinning again and that he has all this from the motive of gratitude toward God. From the nature of gratitude and the nature of God and from human nature we see manifestly that for such a one the step of rising from the motive of gratitude to the motive of charity is so natural as to be easy.

Let us next consider the virtue of special penance. It looks on sin as an offense of infinite majesty, as an injury and insult to the divine honor, as a violation of the essential right of the Infinite Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, that His rational creature's will should follow no proud or sensual whim, but right reason and thus imitate the divine reason and will. It looks on this injustice as an injury and insult that ought

to be repaired and expiated as far as possible by taking back, withdrawing, retracting, and satisfying through opposite acts of honor in sorrow and hate for this injustice and in the purpose of not being guilty of it again.

Is there not an indication of this kind of penance in the following passage of St. Luke (xxiii, 32 sq.)?

“And there were also two other malefactors led with Him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, they crucified Him there and the robbers, one on the right hand and the other on the left. . . . And one of those robbers who were hanged, blasphemed Him, saying: If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us. And the other answering, rebuked him, saying: Neither dost thou fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we received the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done no evil. And he said to Jesus: Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom. And Jesus said to him: Amen I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in paradise.”

Dismas, the malefactor, thief, robber recognized his guilt against God and had such sorrow and detestation for his sins that he accepted his sufferings and death as *just* retribution and reparation to the offended God whom he now feared and revered. It was natural and easy for him to rise from this practical sense of his own *injustice* to a practical sense of God's goodness and lovingness. Since Our Lord said that He was so perfectly forgiven, we know He must have made and did make an act of perfect love for God and an act of perfect contrition. On his death-bed of the cross, with almost His last breath after a life of sins and crimes, this malefactor, thief, and robber in a moment made such an act of love as to blot out even all the remnants of sin, all the temporal punishments due to them, and entered with Our Lord into paradise that day and is inscribed and venerated ever since in the Church's calendar as St. Dismas. Is it hard for us to imitate the example of the thief and like him rise from special penance to perfect contrition?

We now consider whether it is natural and easy for the soul resolved to be obedient to God to rise from this motive to that of love for our loving God because He is good. We will rest our whole proof, or, rather, illustration, of this part of our proposition on one example.

The following facts were learned by the writer in his childhood from officers and soldiers of a loving and lovable general: He was not a hater of creature comforts and partook of them freely in his sociable visits to the mess of his fellow officers. These were ever welcome in his tent at meal time, but in spite of their twittings he would never permit on his table anything that had not been issued by the commissary as rations to each one of the eight thousand men of his command. During all the years of the war he gave up the use of tobacco or alcohol, lest his hand or eye might be weakened or unsteadied or his mind in any way dulled and the lives of his men thence endangered. One morning, after one of many forced marches on no food but scanty rations of parched Indian corn such as was fed to the horses, a group of veterans were loudly murmuring at his exacting severity as they arose from the frozen ground and shook the snow from their coats and blankets. The loud noise awoke a comrade who had been lying near. His beard and whole countenance were disguised by almost a mask of snow and when it was brushed off there was seen the general himself sharing the hardships of his men! Their mutinous murmurings were changed into hearty cheers. His command was usually selected for the front of the attack and the rear of the retreat to defend the routed army against overwhelming numbers rushing on flushed with victory. At times his men saw him gallop to the front, dismount, and send his horse to the far rear and on foot with back to the foe and his face to his own ranks and his eye apparently on each one of his men, thus lead them to a charge as on dress parade and make them hold their fire until they came within close range. Once in a retreat through a narrow mountain gap he detached two twelve-pound Napoleon guns and took them to the rear and made the artillery-men load them heavily with canister shot and mask them with branches of trees. He himself stood at the muzzle of these guns with drawn sword preventing the cannoneers from firing until the enemy were within a hundred yards. He then stepped aside and gave the word and a whole army corps were hurled back amid slaughter and confusion.

One of his men told us that he was lying down one night among some artillerymen off the right wing of the infantry

and witnessed the following scene: The pickets were being driven in by the enemy, as was perceived from the scattered firing becoming nearer and nearer. All along the line in face of the enemy there were blazing camp-fires and the men and the general were cosily warming themselves around them. And the picket firing became still nearer and nearer. And one man said to the other, "Hanged if they haven't caught old Pat napping this time. Get up." "I am more comfortable lying down. They never have caught old Pat napping and never will." "There Pat and all our men are retreating. No, they are lying down a hundred yards behind the blazes." In a moment a night attacking strong force of the enemy fired a volley over the flames and ran forward with a cheer. They passed the fires charging bayonets. But Pat rose and gave the word. There was one volley from our men at close quarters and the enemy's cheer was drowned in our yell and they were all our prisoners or killed. Cannoneer number two had not risen and did not rise but turned over to resume his sleep after the question, "Did not I tell you they would not catch old Pat napping?" Such was the universal confidence in his known ability, vigilance, and care for his men. *As a fact* he had obtained full information of the enemy's plans to surprise him and had pretended to be surprised himself while making every preparation to receive them.

Another time this artilleryman was stationed far in the rear of the infantry during an engagement and saw a number of even Pat's men panic-stricken, stampeded, and running helter-skelter from the firing line. Suddenly the general was seen galloping back at full speed. After outstripping the fleetest of the runners he wheeled about and dismounted and took off his hat and addressed one private after another in a gentle tone. "Look up, boy! Look at me, boy! Don't you see me? Don't you know me? Don't you know your own general? You are a brave soldier. I have often seen you prove it. That's right. You will go back now and do your duty and help us to win this day." And with a gentle tap on the back with his hat and not his sword he touched the men's hearts with love for himself and transformed them into heroes.

Another veteran, who was the general's adjutant, gave us

the following description of the hero's farewell to his staff before the fatal charge in which he met his death. A courier from the general-in-chief of the army arrived with a written order for an immediate charge without waiting for the support of the artillery against an equal force of the enemy who were tried veterans strongly intrenched, supported by artillery, and commanded by a skilful and determined fighter. An officer was shown the order and ventured the suggestion, that there was no need or use to immediately execute the order, which anyhow was folly. At this the gentle hero's eyes became like lightning and his voice as thunder as he exclaimed to his old friend, "How dare you, sir, to suggest that a soldier disobey an order and shirk his duty?" In a moment he recovered his wonted composure, went around among the group of officers and shook hands affectionately with each. He then led the charge and his men carried the works, but the following morning he was found on the field lying among the dead.

After each battle he was most diligent in making out detailed reports and naming each individual who had distinguished himself by efficiency and gallantry on the field. Not content with this, he loved to appear before the military board and there in person ardently advocate the cause of those whom he had commended as worthy of promotion. How each comrade who survived him treasured and handed down as a precious heirloom every line of that praise written by one so conspicuous for soldierly prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance and for special friendship toward himself! Final defeat and poverty softened but in no way dimmed in their souls the fond memory of his worth and love.

This picture might seem to have been invented to amplify the soldier-saint's picture of an earthly king calling his subjects to war. No matter how highly colored we may make it, it is still but a faint shadow of Our Lord, the great Captain of all men in this life, which is a warfare on earth. He is the one ideal man. Besides, in Him are all the treasures of the Godhead. He alone is worthy of our highest esteem and love. And He alone communicates to us His own beatitude, all that He has and is. And His eye is the only one

that can look on us with the tenderest love at our every step and breath. Those soldiers, when resolved to obey that well-nigh perfect and most loving general, had a most strong propensity to obey from love. Those of us who are resolved to obey Our Lord, who is perfect man and infinitely perfect God and who is more loving toward us than our own mothers can be to the fruit of their own wombs, have a far stronger propensity to obey Our Lord from love. Was there as a fact ever such an able, lovable, loving and beloved human general? Our age is not so prone as the age of chivalry to idealizing, idolizing hero-worship. Perhaps it often shows a tendency to hypercritical cynicism. However, our argument does not require the reader's faith in the above narrative or any similar one as truly historic. All that we ask him to grant us is, that *if* there were such a human general and his men were once resolved to obey him, they would naturally and normally also love him for his own sake. Our Lord as a fact is such an able, lovable, and loving commander. Nowadays it is common even among Jewish scholars who do not believe that He is the Messias and our legitimate commander, to grant that He was able, lovable, and loving. All who believe in one God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth and all things visible and invisible, grant that He is a Father most lovable and loving. Therefore, all who are resolved to obey God the Father or God the Son and recall God's lovableness and lovingness, necessarily have a strong propensity to love Him above all things for His own sake. And love for God is thus seen to be easy from its being natural for all men of good will to love Him.

In our chapter on the greatest and first commandment we will see that some held that this commandment is not specific; does not command love for God in the proper and strict sense, but only obedience to God; and is only a generic commandment. As we will there see at some length, they based their errors on certain passages of the Holy Scriptures which appear to say not only that those who love God keep His commandments but also that those who keep the commandments love God, that not only those who love, obey God, but also that obedience to God is love for God.

Manifestly there is no love for God *above all things* for



His own sake without the will to keep the divine commandments. But is there not some foundation of truth also in the maxim that all who keep the commandments likewise love God above all things for His own sake? Yes, there is, according to the above explanations. All, essentially, with strict necessity and absolute universality, love God if they obey Him, we deny. All who obey God, naturally, easily, normally, generally love God in the proper sense—this we not only grant but also contend and have proved. Thus the propensity of obedience to be followed by love is the key to the clear and full understanding of those objected texts which we will weigh with the reader in another place.

Let us next consider how he who hopes also has the strong propensity to love and how love is thus natural and easy for hope. We have here and there already heard authorities like St. Thomas and others telling us that hope prepares and disposes to love and we have heard the Church comparing hope to the blossoms whose nature it is to produce the fruit of love. But can we not ourselves look into the nature of hope and understand for ourselves that as faith strongly inclines to hope, so faith with hope strongly inclines to charity? We read in the catechism the following act of hope: "O, my God, relying on Thy infinite goodness and promises I hope to obtain pardon for my sins, the assistance of Thy grace, and life everlasting through the merits of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Redeemer." Can we make this act of hope even when we are not yet resolved here and now to avoid all mortal sin? Yes. Suppose the following case of a sinner who says to himself: "I will not now forgive those who have trespassed against me, but I am resolved to forgive them at some future time and then to do true penance for all my sins." Or suppose that he says to himself: "I will now commit such or such a mortal sin, but I am resolved with the assistance of God's grace to let this be the last time. After it is over I will repent of it heartily and try never to commit it or any other in the future." Are these cases sinful presumption on God's mercy? No, not necessarily. But it would be if he planned to be forgiven or to make a sacramental confession without true and hearty penance. Certainly this is a very imperfect state but not so guilty as if he said: "I will commit this sin

and *never* repent." The resolve to repent in the future connotes a will less attached to sin.

In this imperfect state could that soul make a true act of hope? Certainly. We can make a true act of faith even without hope and we can make true acts of faith and hope without presently either loving God in the proper sense or without having the practical religion or gratitude or obedience or special penance in the proper sense as above explained. Jansenists denied that without love for God above all things we can have true hope or even faith. But this absurdity of theirs was explicitly condemned by the Holy See and had been condemned also by St. Thomas, St. Augustine and the Doctors and Fathers in general. However, such inefficacious, uneffective hope is not the kind of which we are now treating. We suppose that a man has good will, a resolve to keep the commandments, with the assistance of God's graces, and that he is determined, decided to do so by the motive of hope. And we say that such a one naturally and normally has a strong propensity to love God above all things for His own sake. Is not such practical hope a nobler act than an act of religion, gratitude, obedience, or penance? They are not theological virtues and it is. Does it not thus bring us nearer to God than they can? Of course we suppose that all other things are equal and that this soul is resolved as firmly and to do as much for serving God from the motive of hope as another may be from the motive of one of the other virtues. Gratitude, if distinguished from hope, looks at past benefits; while hope looks at those which are future, future pardon for sins, assistance of grace, and life everlasting. Gratitude looks at benefits received, hope at benefits to be received.

We said "*if* distinguished." They are so interlocked that we can not distinguish them as separated from each other. Their ideas are very near being two views of the same thing, the same thing looked at from two sides or points of view, from the past or from the future. However, hope explicitly takes in as a past fact the merits of Jesus Christ Our Lord and Redeemer and the memory of the divine goodness and promises to us on account of these merits. Let us again consider the following verses of St. Thomas :

“Se nascens dedit socium.  
Convalescens in edulium,  
Se moriens in pretium,  
Se regnans dat in præmium.”

“In birth, man’s fellow-man was He,  
His meat while sitting at the board,  
He died his ransom to be,  
He reigns to be his great reward.”

Hope regards this great reward and the means of attaining it. As we notice, “He reigns to be his great reward,” is the top of the climax. Each of the preceding verses is a lower round leading to this top of the ladder. As a fact the divine beatitude is communicated to us less perfectly here, more perfectly in heaven. Here, through the merits of Our Lord and the action of His Holy Spirit, whom He sends to pour habitual grace and faith and hope and charity and all the moral virtues into our hearts and to enlighten and inspire us by His actual graces, we become sharers of the divine nature and heirs of heaven. There we receive besides, the light of glory and are enabled to see God face to face and have full fruition of our inheritance, God, our reward exceeding great. Thus there is a fuller communication of the divine beatitude. Hence the motive of hope has in it greater power to move to disinterested love than gratitude. Yet, as we have seen, authors commonly assert that practical gratitude to God is morally and practically love for God in the proper sense. Hope is indeed so close to love that many grave authors assert that hope for God as our reward *is* love—with this difference, that love looks at this same object as present and hope looks at it as future and arduous to attain, as we have previously considered. What a divergence among commentators about St. Paul “having a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ.” Some say the Apostle here made an act of hope, and yet St. Thomas, whom they profess to follow closely, says that he made an act of love and most intense love. Therefore, how close hope must be by its very nature to love. Suppose, therefore, that some one, from the motive of hope, is firmly resolved to keep all the commandments or even all the counsels, and that love is natural and easy for men of good will determined by penance, obedience, gratitude, or religion.

If not easier, this is at least easy for one clinging to God's goodness by hope.

"In all thy works remember thy last end and thou shalt never sin." The memory of death, which strips us naked, cures our fascination for the trifles of honors, wealth, pleasures, health, and this short life, each one of them given us only as means for God's service and eternal life. The memory of death gives true prudence or right reason about things to be desired and done by us. The memory of our judgment after death by God on the use of His gifts to keep His law and counsels, engenders justice, by which we are inclined to give every one his rights. The memory of purgatory and hell, where torments are proportioned to past abundance of guilty delights, engenders temperance or moderation in the enjoyment of earthly delectations. The memory of heaven and of its ineffable eternal delights proportioned to good works done on earth, engenders fortitude, courage in overcoming the difficulties in the way of keeping God's commandments and counsels. Grant that there is, as there truly is, great difficulty in resolving to love God above all things for His own sake and in persevering in this resolve. However, grant that there is the courage of hope and the aid of grace, and in practice this yoke of love becomes sweet and this burden of love becomes light.

Is it natural for good will determined by the fear of God's punishments to rise to love for God above all things for His own sake? Yes, if we understand servile fear in the sense of the Church and not in the perverted sense of those who have misunderstood or misrepresented her teachings. Let us give a hearing to our Mother Church about what she tells us is her own teaching on this point. We read as follows in the Council of Trent, session 6, chapter 6:

"Now they (adults) are disposed to said justice when excited and assisted by divine grace, conceiving faith by hearing they are freely moved toward God, believing those things to be true which God has revealed and promised, and this especially that God justifies the impious by His grace through the redemption that there is in Jesus Christ; and when, understanding themselves to be sinners, by turning themselves from the fear of divine justice whereby they are profitably agitated to consider the mercy of God, they are raised unto hope, confiding that God will be propitious to them for Christ's sake,

and they begin to love Him as the fountain of all justice and are therefore moved against sins by a certain hatred and detestation, to wit, by that penance which must be performed before Baptism; lastly, when they purpose to receive Baptism, to begin a new life and to keep the commandments of God. Concerning this disposition it is written: 'He that cometh to God, must believe that He is, and is a rewarder to them that seek Him,' and, 'Be of good faith, son, thy sins are forgiven thee'; and, 'The fear of the Lord driveth out sin'; and, 'Do penance and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost'; and, 'Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost'; finally, 'Prepare your hearts unto the Lord.'

We again transcribe the following already cited passage from session 14, chapter 4:

"And as to that imperfect contrition which is called attrition because it is commonly conceived either from the baseness of sin or from the fear of hell and of punishment, it declares that if with the hope of pardon it exclude the wish to sin it not only does not make a man a hypocrite and greater sinner, but that it is even a gift of God, an impulse of the Holy Ghost, who does not indeed as yet dwell in the penitent but only moves him, whereby the penitent being assisted prepares a way for himself unto justice. For although this (attrition) can not of itself without the sacrament of Penance conduct the sinner to justification, yet does it dispose him to obtain the grace of God in the sacrament of Penance. For smitten profitably with this fear the Ninivites, at the preaching of Jonas, did fearful penance and obtained mercy from the Lord. Wherefore falsely do some calumniate Catholic writers as if they had maintained that the sacrament of Penance confers grace without any good motion on the part of those who receive it; and falsely also do they assert that contrition is extorted and forced, not free and voluntary."

This is the kind of fear of which, with the Church, we are here speaking, and these are its components and accompaniments. Perhaps after perusing these passages there is no need of argument or explanation for one to be convinced that it is natural and easy for one who has good will from *such* fear with *such* accompaniments, also to love God above all things for His own sake.

Servilely servile fear says to itself, "From fear of hell and punishments I am resolved to avoid sin, but only from such fear, so that if there were no hell or punishments I would not be thus resolved and I would commit sin anew." Such servilely servile fear placing in the mind and will the evil of

punishments above the evil of guilt in sin *is* a new sin. Worse still, it attempts to deceive not only man, to whom it speaks, but also God and ourselves. It pretends to have sorrow and detestation of soul for *sin* and a resolve to avoid *sin* and in truth and reality has not. It harbors and cherishes and has not overcome and rejected by a decided act of the will, concupiscence or inclination to sin. It is positively contrary to the precept to love God above all things for His own sake. It violates that precept not only by mere omission but by positive commission, saying, "I will *not* love God above all things for His own sake." It positively loves sin more than God. It makes a formal comparison between friendship for God and for sin and expressly prefers friendship for God's enemy. Therefore we must grant that servilely servile fear (apart from stolidity or invincible ignorance that does not understand itself) is a sin, makes a man a worse sinner and is hypocrisy.

However, search as you may in these decrees or in books of theology approved by the Church and you will not find any approval of servilely servile fear as morally good and much less as a disposition sufficient for justification with the actual reception of the sacrament of baptism or penance. In fact, St. Thomas and all handbooks of moral theology condemn it most explicitly.

Let us consider the fear of hell and punishments as described by the Council. In the first passage we note the words: "they are moved against sins [not merely hell and punishments] by a certain hatred and detestation, to wit, by that penance that must be performed before Baptism." In the second passage we note the words: "if it [fear] exclude the will to sin." Here also we note the words: "with the hope of pardon." In the first passage we note the words: "turning themselves from the fear of divine justice whereby they are profitably agitated, to consider the mercy of God, they are raised unto hope, confiding that God will be propitious to them for Christ's sake."

All theologians ask the question whether it is essential that attrition be confiding, or joined with the hope of mercy for Christ's sake. And they all answer yes, as they must do to be in a line with the teachings of the Scriptures, Fathers, and

Councils. Here St. Francis de Sales exclaims, "What must be the sweetness of heaven since here on earth there is such sweetness in confidence in God's mercy after we have sinned!" If he who began by fearing hell and other divine punishments, has got thus far and has sorrow and detestation for sin as the greatest of evils and has a resolve not to sin anew and has hope of pardon from confidence in the divine mercy of God promised on account of the merits of Our Lord and Redeemer, is not then love for God above all things for his own sake natural and easy for him? The reader may reply that we have already solved this question in the preceding paragraph on hope naturally and easily leading to love. And so we have. And he may recall that Palmieri, after describing in paragraph two the motive of hope, begins paragraph three with the phrase: "To this also belongs the motive of servile fear." Fear of divine punishments with its necessary accompaniments and hope for divine rewards are thus recognized by him to be at least most closely allied if not identical. And this remark of his is according to the mind of the Council of Trent, as we have seen from the phrases specially noted above.

How then does fear operate on the sinner? It drives him to run away from the divine punishments and fly to the mercy of God promised on account of the merits of Our Lord and from this the step to the motive of love for God is natural and easy.<sup>1</sup>

The question is asked in the schools of theology whether contrition from the motive of religion or gratitude or obedience or special penance is perfect contrition. Those who treat the question understand full well that none of these moral virtues is a theological virtue or has in it the motive of charity or love in the proper sense. They thus do not ask whether religion, gratitude, obedience, or penance *is* charity, but whether sorrow for sin determined by the special motive of one of these virtues has the same effect as charity as a proximate or perfect disposition for receiving justifying and sanctifying grace and remission of original sin or actual mortal sin without the actual reception of a Christian sacrament. To this question, therefore, not whether each of these virtues

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<sup>1</sup>For further discussion on this point, see Appendix I, page 553.

is charity, but whether when determining penance it makes this penance a perfect disposition for receiving sanctifying grace, some say, "probably yes," some, "certainly yes," some, "certainly no." The last school is by far the most numerous. Their teaching is so common among theologians and so widespread among the Catholic people that some readers at first may feel shocked that it should be contradicted or doubted by any Catholic. This question has been disputed in the schools for centuries, and is there disputed now and probably will be there disputed forever. It would be presumptuous in us to pretend to cut it. However, some readers may have curiosity to know what the writer thinks on it. Well, on this theoretical question we can see no reason for doubting the truth of the teaching which follows the sentiment of the Church as manifested in the whole world by the catechisms and sermons for the people. Moreover, according to the obvious interpretation of the Tridentine chapter four, session fourteen, above cited, "to simple attrition is attributed in general and *in globo* every motive which is not the motive of perfect love or true friendship toward God."<sup>1</sup>

That is, sorrow from love is called "perfect contrition" and sorrow from any other motive, "attrition." Can and ought we to say that sorrow for sin grounded on religion, gratitude, obedience, or special penance is grounded on the motive of the baseness of sin? Yes, it seems that we can and ought. Moreover, if we take some particular virtue, or better, some sin opposed to some particular virtue, as, for example, intemperance in eating and drinking, it is a disorder, a repugnance to right reason and to our rational nature and thus a baseness, even though we do not consider it as an offense of God. However, it is essential to its very concept as a *sin* in the proper and full sense, that we should consider it as a repugnance not only to our rational nature but also to the law of God. Thus the very concept of baseness of *sin* explicitly includes opposition to obedience, religion, gratitude, justice, or some such other universal virtue. Hence it appears that sorrow from the motive of any of these virtues is called by the Council, sorrow from the baseness of *sin* and is thus called simple attrition.

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<sup>1</sup>Billot, *The Sacraments*, Vol. II, page 141.



Pesch argues that sorrow from hope is more perfect than that from the motive of any of these moral virtues, and that, as the Council holds that sorrow from hope is not perfect contrition but simple attrition, therefore we who follow the authority of the Council ought to hold that sorrow from the motive of any of these moral virtues is still only simple attrition.

As the reader has noticed, we have here spoken of our view on that *theoretical* question. We speak without any hesitation on the *practical* question whether he who has sorrow from any of those motives, naturally, normally, and easily also has sorrow from the motive of love. We submit that we have given proofs that this practical question must be answered affirmatively and certainly, so that the theoretical question is of almost no importance. This answer is not singular. We have heard St. Ignatius saying that fear of divine punishments, even the least noble of all these motives, is easily followed by love. We have heard the same affirmed and proved by Kilber. Cardinal Billot is one of the most positive of those who oppose the milder theoretical doctrine as certainly false, and yet we have heard him asserting also most positively, that love is natural for any one who has simple attrition from any proper motive.

The Confiteor is the liturgical act of contrition. In the Missal it is the one prescribed for the priest before going up to the altar to offer the sacrifice of the Mass. It is likewise the one prescribed by the liturgy for the people before receiving the Eucharist or the sacrament of Penance or Extreme Unction, or the plenary indulgence at death. Do we find in the Confiteor any special motive for our contrition? No, we do not find there either fear of divine punishments, or hope for divine rewards, or love for God because He is good, or the motive of religion, or of obedience, or of gratitude, or of justice, or of any similar special motive. Why this omission? Does it not indicate that for centuries our wise and tender and watchful Mother expected that any priest who recites the Confiteor heartily, will be thereby prepared to go worthily up to the altar of God and there worthily consecrate and eat and drink of the body and blood of Our Lord? To the priest who has recited the Confiteor the server representing the people responds: "May the Almighty God have mercy on

thee and having forgiven thy sins bring thee to everlasting life," and to this the priest in turn responds, "Amen." And the server representing the people in turn recites the Confiteor. And the priest responds: "May the Almighty God have mercy on you and having forgiven your sins bring you to everlasting life." And the server responds, "Amen." And the priest resumes: "May the Almighty and Merciful God grant us indulgence, absolution, and remission of our sins." And the server responds, "Amen."

Surely priest and people who have come to receive this holiest of the sacraments should be free from mortal sin, and if any mortal sin has been committed it should already have been remitted through sacramental confession and absolution. But accidents will happen and without their own advertence, souls may be then seen by the eye of God to be actually stained with the guilt of mortal sin. Do not these prayers in their natural obvious sense provide even for this extraordinary case? Are not the terms, "having forgiven your sins," "remission of our sins" obviously unlimited and universal and do they not apply to all sins, mortal as well as venial?

As we see the priest humbling himself, standing afar off from the altar with his body bowed down low, not yet daring to look up at the altar or at heaven and God, and beating his breast and confessing to God and the whole court of heaven that he has sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed through his fault, through his fault, through his most grievous fault, and beseeching the Blessed Mother and all the saints to pray to God for him, do we not recognize there the rehearsal of the Gospel scene of the prayer of the publican?

"And the publican standing afar off would not so much as lift his eyes toward heaven, but struck his breast, saying, O, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. I say to you this man went down justified." (Luke xviii. 10.) And before he went down justified he must have made an act of perfect contrition, an act of love for God above all things for his own sake. Now in the light of this gospel scene and of the preceding explanations of how all good will is naturally followed by love, does not the Church manifestly expect the priest and the people to imitate this publican not only outwardly but also inwardly, in an act by which they are justified as was the publican?

We read in Psalm xxxi. 1 sq.:

“Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord hath not imputed sin and in whom there is no guile. Because I was silent my bones grew old, whilst I cried out all the day long. For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me. I am turned in my anguish whilst the thorn is fastened. I have acknowledged my sin to Thee and my injustice I have not concealed. *I said, I will confess against myself my injustice to the Lord and Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin.*”

The reader is requested to consider those closing words which we have italicised. There is apparent no special motive of penance or contrition. Certainly there is no mention of the motive of love for God. Yet confession to God is here followed by forgiveness of the wickedness of sin. Why then should we not presume that such confession to God is generally followed by such forgiveness, and is generally accompanied by love? The Church in formulating her Confiteor certainly had before her eyes not only the scene of the publican but also this verse, which is so often recurred to by the Fathers and Councils.

We read the following passage in 2 Kings xii, 1-13:

“And the Lord sent Nathan to David. And when he was come to him he said to him: There were two men in one city, the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many sheep and oxen. But the poor man had nothing at all but one ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up, and which had grown up in his house together with his children, eating of his bread and drinking of his cup and sleeping in his bosom. And it was unto him as a daughter. And when a certain stranger was come to the rich man, he spared to take of his own sheep and oxen, to make a feast for that stranger who was come to him, but took the poor man's ewe and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David's anger being exceedingly kindled against that man, he said to Nathan, as the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this is a child of death. He shall restore the ewe fourfold, because he did this thing and had no pity. And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the Lord the God of Israel: I anointed thee king over Israel; and I delivered thee from the hand of Saul, and gave thee thy master's house and thy master's wives into thy bosom and gave thee the house of Israel and Juda. And if these things be little I shall add far greater things unto thee. Why therefore hast thou despised the word of the Lord to do evil in my sight? Thou hast killed Urias the Hethite with the sword and hast taken his wife to be thy wife and

hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised Me and hast taken the wife of Urias the Hethite to be thy wife. Thus saith the Lord: Behold I will raise up evil against thee out of thy own house, and I will take thy wives before thy eyes and will give them to thy neighbor and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of the sun. For thou didst it secretly, but I will do this thing in the sight of all Israel and in the sight of the sun. And David said to Nathan: I have sinned against the Lord (*Peccavi Domino*). And Nathan said to David: The Lord also hath taken away thy sin."

Nothing could be less specific and more generic than the act of contrition of David according to its words. Yet after it Nathan said as the prophet of God, "The Lord hath taken away thy sin."

Certainly therefore David's seemingly generic contrition was interiorly determined and specified by the motive of love and most probably also by the motive of fear, hope, religion, gratitude, obedience, and penance. As has often been remarked, in all the Scriptures there is not recorded one instance of a sinner who had turned away from sin and had become a man or woman of good will, but what that sinner was forgiven by God. In this universal fact, what a confirmation of our proposition that he who has good will, generally has love also, and that love is natural to him.

We beg the reader to recall the return and reception of the prodigal son and of the stray sheep and the rescue and care by the Good Samaritan of the traveler who had fallen among robbers and been stripped and wounded and left half dead. How natural in them, then, was the supreme love for the Kind Father, the Good Shepherd, and the Good Samaritan! And in one who is conscious of having been brought back by God's graces from sin and its loss of heaven and condemnation to hell and its stripping us of all the treasures of merits which we might have hoarded by many good works done in grace with good intentions—brought back from all this and clothed in the wedding-garment of grace and enriched by the revival of all past merits and made heirs of God and co-heirs with Jesus Christ, the propensity to love our infinitely good God now propitious and supremely loving to us is stronger than in the welcomed prodigal or strayed sheep or rescued traveler.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF GOD'S INTERIOR GRACES CAUSE ACTS OF LOVE TO BE EASY AND COMMON

As the reader has observed, we have often joined the words "common" and "easy." Our purpose was to qualify "easiness" by "commonness," and to affirm only that love is so easy as to be common. Could we have said or meant that acts of love are easy without any qualification, so that there is nothing hard found in them? We could not by any means.

In a way, love for God above all things for His own sake is the hardest for the soul of any kind of act. Love must be ready to meet an additional difficulty besides all those which any or all of the other virtues must encounter. The whole is greater than any of its parts, and the difficulties facing love are, to those facing shame, fear, hope, religion, gratitude, obedience, justice, as the whole is to its parts. Charity is the queen of all the virtues and commands the attendance of the entire cortège of her sisters. When she is present, all must be not only present but prompter from charity's gladness to perform the functions of their special offices, and in order to do so, prompter to meet their special difficulties. Only charity or love for God can give the virtues this strength, and she could not give it to others unless she possessed it herself.

Charity is the fulness of the law, is a love for God which is not only resolved but glad to keep *all* of the commandments of God, who is loved. Some of us are grievously tempted often, others less often. But every man's spiritual life on earth is a warfare against the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life. And Satan and the world, his human tool, are actively employed in working on these inclinations to induce us to consent to evil. Our life being a state of war, every soul which is resolved not to be enslaved by the enemy must be ready for occasional pitched battles. No soul remains a long time free from a grievous

temptation, a strong inclination to mortal sin against one or another of the commandments of God, against one or another of the virtues. And without the aid of an interior supernatural actual grace of God the difficulty for our soul to overcome even one such grievous temptation is so great that it is taught by theologians to be morally impossible. "I see another law in my members fighting against the law of my mind and captivating me in the law of sin, that is in my members. Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God by Jesus Christ Our Lord." Even St. Paul was tempted and could not overcome his temptation without the grace of God merited by Our Lord.

Our Lord was not descended from Adam in the natural way. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of a Virgin Mother, Mary Immaculate. His human nature was hypostatically united to the Person of the Word, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. There was not in His members any vestige of the law fighting against the law of His mind. In Him there was no concupiscence, no fuel of sin, no inclination coming from original sin and impelling to actual sin. Yet He wished to be outwardly solicited to sin by the devil, to show us that temptation is not sin, and to show us how to meet temptation, and above all to show us that if His saints and even Himself were tempted, we, too, must expect to be tempted.

All of us need the helping hands of God and His angels to bear us up lest we dash our feet against the stones that here and there obstruct the path of every soul on life's journey to heaven, the beautiful city of God high up on His celestial mount. The way of the commandments is the main road to heaven, and the way of the counsels is the narrower path and shorter cut. Other virtues creep or walk on this road or path. Love with dilated heart runs or flies, imitating Our Lord, Who "exulted as a giant to run His course." But all who creep or walk, or run or fly, must be resolved to surmount the stumbling-blocks that will beset their progress.

Love for God, perfect contrition, and imperfect contrition or attrition, must be above all things, supreme. Our sorrow

and detestation for sin must practically value, estimate, appreciate with mind and will the offense of God, this moral, spiritual evil, as greater than any other evil. Our love for God, infinitely perfect and worthy of our highest love, must likewise practically appreciate God and His friendship above every other good. It must say to itself, "I am resolved not to do anything grievously wrong for any consideration of loss or gain of creatures." Moreover, for the moment turning its eyes from the baseness of sin, the fear of God's punishments and the hope for His rewards, it says to itself, "I am resolved to avoid everything grievously wrong simply *because* it grievously displeases and offends God, whom I love for His own sake." We would not and could not have said that there is nothing hard in this for the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve, who sinned in Paradise and there stripped themselves and us of the privilege of supernatural innocence and integrity of soul in which they had been created and which is not restored to us in Baptism. The commandments after all are a yoke, a burden, a cross to any soul. The counsels after all are a greater yoke, burden, cross to any soul. He who has the substance of love, contrition or attrition must be resolved to bear this yoke, burden, cross. We could not and would not have said or meant that there is nothing hard in this, that this is easy from every point of view.

After conceding this, we must add some explanations lest any reader may even for a moment be the prey of a false impression and exaggerate the difficulty. As practical spiritual writers observe, the Holy Scriptures say that the life of man on earth is a warfare, but do not say that it is a continuous pitched battle. In war skirmishing may be well-nigh continuous, but pitched battles recur only from time to time. After the enemy has been checked, routed, and driven back from a fortress by a well-aimed mighty blow, his return may not be so quick. He may never again attack from that same side. When we resolve to love God we do not need to expect a strong temptation to mortal sin against every commandment, or every day or even every month.

When we resolve to avoid mortal sin, or venial sins or imperfections, must we be certain that we will avoid them, must we promise that we will never commit them? By no

means. We are not prophets and we can not be certain or promise God that we will never commit sin or imperfection. Indeed, we can and should promise at least to give up voluntary proximate occasions of mortal sin, such as dangerous books, places, associations, etc. Those who have taken away the goods of another against his reasonable will, or have unjustly damaged his goods or good name, must make restitution or reparation, or at least promise to do so. But the resolution to do a good or avoid an evil does not always necessarily include a promise.

A teacher once gave a boy a punishment to be done for repeatedly breaking silence in class. After the class the teacher said: "John, I would like to let you off of those lines if you will promise not to talk in class for a week." "Father," the boy replied, "I value my word. I would rather write the lines. I never make a promise unless I am sure that I will keep it." The teacher was so much pleased with the boy's regard for his word that he let him off the lines. However, that boy made a resolution to have more regard for his teacher and his more diligent classmates, and kept strict silence in class for several weeks. This example illustrates a principle. A promise refers to the future, a resolution is only a serious disposition existing in the present, here and now, to try in the future to avoid evil or to do good.

We read in the Ritual the following words by which the groom and bride with joined right hands pledge themselves to each other:

"I, N. N., take thee N. N. for my lawful wife [husband] to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part."

Here there is a descent to particular evils. At this moment of joyous love it is not imprudent. This speaking and hearing of the intensity of mutual love here does not dampen but increases the joy of the wedding. Our Lord turned water into wine to gladden the hearts of the groom and bride and wedding-guests of Cana. And the Church would not permit these words to be used if they tended to cast gloom over a marriage. However, a rubric reminds us that these words are not in the Roman Ritual, but their use is only a local cus-



tom. The substantial words of the contract preceding these are:

"N., wilt thou take N. here present for thy lawful wife [husband] according to the rite of our holy Mother, the Church? R. I will."

Here there is no descent to particular difficulties, nor is there any reference even to difficulties in general or to a resolution to meet and overcome them. However, he who takes a woman as his wife, and she who takes a man as her husband, by the fact make the implicit resolution and promise to keep troth and lend mutual aid and consolation through all adversity up to death itself.

Incidentally, we observe that the course of wedded love may flow deep and smooth under many moons. Likewise love for God may keep all the commandments for some time without any considerable difficulty and without any strong inclination to violate any grave obligation. Since the fall there is not only a law in our members inclining us to excessive seeking of wealth, honor, and sensual pleasure, but there is also in our mind a law inclining us to love to do what is right. Without supernatural faith we can not please God so as to be in the state of grace and so as to be true friends and heirs of God. Yet without faith and without the aid of any interior supernatural grace we have the power to perform many acts of the natural virtues, and they are possible not only physically and theoretically but also morally and practically. To assert the contrary would be to contradict the Church's explicit definitions against Luther, Calvin, Baius, etc. Moreover, it would suppose that the fall of Adam stripped us of reason and free will in all things religious and moral.

However, after all of these explanations it remains that the supernatural love for God (and we are speaking of this in our whole book) is the most difficult of all acts. Faith is impossible without the aid of supernatural interior grace aiding our mind and will to freely assent to revealed truth on account of the authority of God revealing it. This was defined against the Pelagians. And it was defined against the semi-Pelagians that even the beginning of faith, the pious desire to believe, is impossible without the aid of supernatural interior grace moving us to such a desire. He who has faith may not have

hope, he may be downhearted and pusillanimous and not have the magnanimous courage required to look on heaven and the means of attaining it as possible for himself. He may cry out like Cain, "My sin is too great to be forgiven," and keep his soul's eye so fixed on his own vileness and weakness that he will not look up at God's infinite goodness and power and at His promises made on account of the merits of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Redeemer. Faith is impossible without grace, and hope is impossible without an additional grace. Without both faith and hope the love of friendship for God is not only impossible but unthinkable. Besides the difficulties in faith and hope there is an additional difficulty in charity, in the soul's flying up from the receiving of knowledge in faith and of happiness in hope to giving itself to God, to clinging to God for His own sake, to resting in God alone.

Why, then, do we say that love or charity is easy and common? Because the grace to love God is common, and this grace is given by God to make love easy, and God does all things well.

How few of us would be alive but for the millions of cares of our mothers during the many hours of the days and nights of our helpless childhood! How little knowledge or virtue we would have but for a still greater number of cares of our parents and of our teachers, holding the place of our parents, who provided them for us. But leaving out our intellectual and moral life and education, how could we have even physical life and growth without the countless tender offices rendered by our mothers? God gives a babe to a mother. He commands her to do for this babe all the hard things needed by it, and she does them, and they are not hard for her. They are so easy as to be common if not universal among mothers. How does God bring this about? He pours into that mother's breasts the milk needed to nourish the babe. But above all He pours into her heart the mother's love for the fruit of her own womb, and in the might of this infused virtue she loves to do for her babe those countless hard things, and her acts of self-sacrificing love are made easy and common.

In a somewhat similar way God makes self-sacrificing acts of love for Himself and love for His commandments, virtues and counsels, easy and common. He pours into our hearts

love for Himself and His service as He pours into the hearts of mothers love for their babes and for maternal cares for their babes. "The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given to us." (Rom. v. 5.) "We have received the spirit of adoption of sons in which we cry out Abba, Father." (Rom. viii. 15.) "And because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father." (Gal. iv. 6.) "As many as received Him, He gave them power to be made sons of God, to them that believe in His name, who are born not of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 12, 13.)

Here we realize that He who makes us sons with the duty of filial love for our Father, also pours into our souls the spirit of sons by which we can easily fulfil this high duty to our Father, just as when He makes a woman a mother with the duty of maternal love and care for her child He pours into her heart the spirit of a mother toward that child. The gift of such a spirit is not extraordinary but ordinary in both cases. The more we pore over these inspired words of the apostles St. Paul and St. John, the more deeply will we be convinced that it never entered into their apostolic minds to teach that the divine gift of the power to love God is only in the souls of great saints, who have been few among Christians in every age and even in the primitive age of first fervor in the Church.

"In justification itself with the remission of sins, through Jesus Christ on whom he is engrafted, man receives all these things, faith, hope and charity, at the same time poured in." (Council of Trent—Session 6. Decree on Justification, chapter 7.)

Here the Council speaks not of great saints, but of every soul that is free from original and mortal sin and is justified. In justification every soul is said by the Council to receive the supernatural virtue, the permanent power and inclination not only to believe and hope but also to love.

Every one who has a soul also has the faculties of will, memory, and understanding, and likewise every one who has the gift of habitual grace also has the virtues of faith, hope, and charity. The child who has not attained the use of reason has not the use of his natural rational faculties, and yet he possesses them radically. And neither can the newly baptized babe exercise these supernatural virtues, but the powers are

there. One who is in the state of grace, and also has the use of reason, not only has the infused power and inclination to love God for His own sake, but as this power was given by God that acts of love might be a second nature and easy, and as it is like fire and by its essence the most active of all the virtues and the most delightful to itself in its exercise, it is clear that all ordinary Christians who are in the state of grace have that in them by which they can easily love God supernaturally.

Some say that this power is of itself fully equipped and ready to elicit acts of love, while other theologians hold that besides this faculty Almighty God's additional actual graces are necessary for it to act, and that this branch to bear fruit must not only be engrafted but also receive sap flowing from the Vine. However, both sides come to the same in the end and agree on practice. For the second school requiring these actual graces says that they are given in the greatest abundance to those who do not impede them, as the living Vine wishing the branch to bear the fruit of love or charity does not withhold the flow of its sap.

The catechism of the Council of Trent thus speaks of the effects of Baptism:

"The progress of grace in the soul is also accompanied by a most splendid train of virtues, and hence when writing to Timothy, the Apostle says: 'He saved us by the laver of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Ghost, whom He hath poured forth *abundantly* through Jesus Christ our Saviour.'

"St. Augustine, in explanation of the words 'poured forth on us abundantly' says, 'that is, for the remission of sins and for *abundance* of virtues.' By Baptism we are also united to Christ as members to their head; as, therefore, from the head proceeds the power by which the different members of the body are impelled to the proper performance of their peculiar functions, so from the fulness of Christ the Lord are diffused divine grace and virtue through all those who are justified, qualifying them for the performance of all the offices of Christian piety.

"We are, it is true, supported by a powerful array of virtues. It should not, however, excite our surprise if we can not without much labor and difficulty undertake or, at least, perform acts of piety and moral virtue. If this is so, it is not because the goodness of God has not bestowed on us the virtues from which the actions emanate, but because after Baptism there remains a severe conflict of the flesh against the spirit, in which, however, it would not become

a Christian to grow faint. Relying on the divine goodness, we should confidently hope that by a constant habit of leading a good life the time will arrive when 'whatever things are modest, whatever just, whatever holy' will also prove easy and agreeable. Be those the subjects of our fond consideration, be those the objects of our cheerful practice, that the God of peace may be with us."

On reflection we gather from those last words that with meditation and practice these virtues become more easy so as to be agreeable and lose much of their difficulty, but not that they were not before so easy as to be common.

St. Thomas 3. q. 69. a. 5. says:

"Since by Baptism men are incorporated in Christ, it is clear that the baptized received from Christ their Head a spiritual sense and movement: the one while they are illumined about the knowledge of truth, and the other since through the infusion of grace they are endowed with fecundity of good works. By Baptism one is regenerated into the spiritual life which is through the faith of Christ, as the Apostle says (Gal. ii. 20): 'But whereas I now live in the flesh, I live in the faith of the Son of God.' But life is only of members united to the head from which they receive sense and movement. And thus it is necessary that through Baptism we be incorporated in Christ as His members. But as from the natural head there flow sense and movement to the members, so from the spiritual head which is Christ there flow to its members spiritual sense which consists in knowledge of truth and spiritual movement which is by influx of grace. Whence in John i. 14: 'We have seen Him full of grace and truth,' and in John i. 16: 'And from His fulness we have all received.' And thus it follows that the baptized are illumined by Christ about knowledge of truth, and that by the infusion of grace they are fecundated by Him with a fecundity of good works."

"And I say to you, ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. And which of you if he ask his father bread will he give him a stone, or a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent, or if he ask an egg will he reach him a scorpion? If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the good Spirit to them that ask Him." (Luke xi. 9-13.)

The good Spirit here is that of filial love for our Father in heaven, and is that which is a gift from heaven. Does our Lord teach that this is only for a select few? No, but for any one who will ask it.

Here we must beware of a false impression which some leave on our minds when in sermons or writings they insist

upon the necessity of prayer to receive the divine graces. When Our Divine Lord says, "if you ask you shall receive," does it follow that He expresses or implies, "if you do not ask you shall not receive"? By no means. By the rules of logic and good sense, it does follow that if you have not received then you have not asked, at least aright. But it does not follow that if you do not ask you will not receive, or that we never receive any graces which we have not asked. Let us consider this prayer which is said after the Litany of the Saints and which in many Catholic schools is recited before each hour of class or study :

"Prevent, we beseech Thee, O Lord, all our actions by Thy holy inspirations and carry them on by Thy gracious assistance, that every prayer and work of ours may always begin from Thee, and having begun by Thee may by Thee be happily ended."

In the order of causality the grace of God is manifestly seen to be antecedent to our prayer which begins from Him and not from us or our natural unaided good will. Here manifestly there must be grace to pray before we pray, and something received before it was asked.

"But Isaias is bold and saith: I was found by them that did not seek me. I appeared openly to them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith: All the day long have I spread my hands to a people that believeth not and contradicteth me." (Rom. x. 20, 21.)

"It is God who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish according to His good will." (Philipp. ii. 13.)

"Without Me you can do nothing." (John xv. 5.)

"Behold, I stand at the gate and knock. If any man shall hear My voice and open the door to Me, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with Me." (Apoc. iii. 20.)

"Wisdom is glorious and never fadeth away and is easily seen by them that love her, and is found by them that seek her. She *preventeth* them that covet her so that she *first* showeth herself to them. He that awaketh early to seek her shall not labor, for he *shall find her sitting at his door*. To think therefore upon her is perfect understanding, and he that watcheth for her shall quickly be secure. For she goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her, and she showeth herself to them cheerfully in the ways, and meeteth them with all providence. For the beginning of her is the most true desire of discipline, and the care of discipline is love, and love is the keeping of her laws, and the keeping of her laws is the firm foundation of incorruption, and incorruption bringeth near to God." (Wisdom vi. 13 sq.)

“There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee and the mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus also was invited and His disciples to the marriage. And the wine failing the mother of Jesus saith to Him, They have no wine, etc.”

Neither the bride nor the bridegroom, nor their parents, nor the chief steward, nor any one of the rest of the company who received the miraculous wine asked Jesus for it or asked Mary to ask her Divine Son for it, yet they all received it. Many of the Fathers tell us that this wine is a mystic symbol of supernatural love for God. It, too, is often received by those who do not ask for it. They go further and tell us that it is even often received by those who are positively unworthy of it and sometimes in the very midst of their enormous crimes and impieties. Almighty God is not only the Father of the prodigal who was ready to welcome home the wayward wanderer who had turned his back on father, home, friends, happiness, and abundance, and had dissipated his substance by living riotously, and had been reduced to serve a stranger and tend swine and crave their husks, with no one to give them to him. And He is not only this same Father who, when the prodigal had said, “I will rise and go to my father and say, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee,” and had approached his home, ran out to meet him and fell on his neck and kissed him, and put shoes on his feet and the ring of love on his finger, and clothed him with the richest garment and killed the fatted calf, and called on all to feast and dance with joy because the son who was lost was found and he who was dead was come to life. We say God is not only the Father of the prodigal ready to receive His returning son with tenderest welcome and to reinstate him as a son and heir, but He is also the Good Shepherd who goes out into the desert after the lost, stray sheep and brings him back in His arms to the fold. Thus, the Father of the prodigal would have been more like Almighty God to us when we are in sin, if instead of staying and waiting at home, he had gone into the far strange land after the prodigal in the midst of his riotous living, his tending of the swine of degrading passions, and his craving for their husks. Indeed, no prodigal has it in his power to wish to return unless the Father goes to him and attracts him by His interior supernatural grace.

The Fathers instance the conversion of David, St. Matthew, St. Peter, St. Paul, when their hearts were still full of unrepented adultery, murder, avarice, apostasy, or hatred of the saints and of Christ. And they tell us that there are many other similar examples of wonders of the mercy of God generously distributing His greatest gifts even to His greatest enemies. He thus not only loves us when we are His enemies, but often looks at the greater needs of His greater enemies as the measure of the greater abundance of His graces. In general, the saints who have loved God more in the end, seem to be those to whom more had been forgiven, and the memory of God's greater special merciful love was the fuel of their own greater love.

"The word grace is used in two senses. Sometimes it means the habitual gift of God, and at other times an aid of God moving the soul to good. When it is taken in the first meaning, some preparation by grace is pre-required for grace, for a form can not exist in a matter which is not properly disposed. But if we speak of grace as it means a divine help moving to good, then on the part of man there is not required any preparation previous to the divine help, but on the contrary any preparation which can exist in man is from the aid of God moving the soul to good. And according to this the free will's movement preparing for the reception of the habitual gift is the free will's act moved by God." (St. Thomas I. 2. q. 112. a. 2.)

Here St. Thomas only follows St. Augustine and all the Fathers and Councils in their interpretation of the apostle's maxim "What hast thou which thou hast not received?"

What about the abundance of graces to truly love God which are given to those who have made an effort to do what is right?

"When one who is not baptized begins to have the use of reason, the first thought which occurs to man is to deliberate about himself, and if he orders himself to his proper end, by grace he will obtain remission of original sin.' (St. Thomas I. 2. q. 89. a. 6.)

Here St. Thomas is understood by great commentators like Cajetan, Bañez, Soto, Medina, Suarez and others, to mean that this child who says to himself that he will be a morally good child, and seek his own true happiness, will be aided by grace to do what is necessary to obtain remission of original sin. And the Angelic Doctor and all of these his disciples



always require a true act of love for this, outside of the case of martyrdom or actual baptism.

“The supernatural light of faith will be immediately infused in such a child rightly deliberating about his salvation in the first instant of the use of reason. And this illumination will not be miraculous but the regular course of divine providence, to which it pertains to leave no one without a sufficient remedy or the necessary help for salvation. To these considerations should be added what is said by most learned men: Durandus, in 4 dist. 4. q. 7., and the most learned Victoria in the treatise about one arriving at the use of reason, and the most wise Cano in the treatise on the sacraments, that it is not necessary that immediately after the child rightly deliberates, the supernatural light be infused into him, or that he be then justified by grace, but that it is enough if he be justified proximately or even after some delay of time according to the moderation of divine providence. Finally, it must be remarked that as there can be ignorance about faith in those who have heard nothing about the gospel, so also there can be invincible ignorance of God in one when he first reaches the use of reason. And as, if the former do what is in them, they are immediately illuminated by God, so also it is to be thought about this child if he does what is in his power according to his age and education.” (Medina 1. 2. q. 89. 6.)

“Although by the sole natural inclination of loving God we can not arrive at the felicity of loving Him as we ought, however, if we use that inclination well, the sweetness of divine goodness will give us a help by which we can go further. And if we obey this first help, the paternal goodness of God will supply another greater help and lead us from good to better with all sweetness, even to supreme love to which our natural inclination spurs us. Since it is certain that to him who is faithful in few things the divine benignity never denies aid to promote him more and more.” (St. Francis de Sales, “Treatise on the Love of God,” Book I, chapter 18.)

“It is known to you and to us that those who labor under ignorance of our holy religion, but who lead a good and righteous life, sedulously keeping the natural law and its precepts engraven by God on the hearts of all, and are prepared to obey God, can by the operation of the power of divine light and grace obtain eternal life, since God who plainly beholds, searches and knows the minds, souls, thoughts and dispositions of all, according to His supreme goodness and clemency, by no means suffers any one to be punished with eternal torments who has not the guilt of voluntary fault.” (Pius IX, 10 Aug., 1863, to Bishops of Italy.)

Again we must recall that without an act of love salvation is impossible in this case.

“It must be held as certain that those who labor under invincible ignorance of the true religion are not held guilty of this thing before the eyes of God. But now who will rise to such a pitch of arrogance

as to mark out the limits of such ignorance according to the nature and variety of peoples, regions, characters, and so many other things. For when we shall be freed from these corporeal bonds and see God as He is, we will finally understand with what a close and beautiful union the divine mercy and justice are joined together." (Pius IX, December 9, 1854.)

*"Facienti quod est in se, Deus non denegat gratiam."* "To him who does what is in his power, God does not refuse grace." This saying of theologians, Doctors, Councils, and Fathers comes down to us stamped with the seal of the approbation of the Church through many centuries. It neither says nor means that God gives His grace *only* to one who does what is in his power, as Our Lord's maxim, "he that asketh receiveth," neither says nor implies that only he who asks receives. And no Catholic theologian ever took it or understood it in this narrow sense. St. Thomas and others often use the saying to mean that "to him who does what is in his power through grace received, God does not refuse further grace." However, both St. Thomas and other theologians not infrequently use it in the sense that "to him who does what is in his power from the possession of natural free will unaided by grace, God does not refuse supernatural grace." They disclaim any intention of teaching or implying that there is any thing in an act done by natural powers which in any way moves God to give graces which are supernatural, that there is any moral proportion between the natural and the supernatural, that there is any intrinsic worthiness in the one that deserves the other in any sense, that there is any intrinsic merit in them by which we can claim supernatural graces under the title of strict justice or the title of only less strict justice, or propriety and fittingness. They affirm that there is in them no merit, either condign or congruous, of supernatural grace. St. Paul said, "For the rest there is laid up for me a crown of justice which the Lord, the just Judge, will render to me in that day, and not only to me but to them also that love His coming." This crown of justice is rendered by the Lord, the just Judge, *because* when the time of our dissolution is at hand, we have fought the good fight, finished our course, and kept the faith, however not without but with merciful supernatural grace with which we have co-operated. And here, on account of God's promise and His gifts and our

co-operation there is intrinsic merit in our fight, race, and faith, and it moves God to be just and give us life everlasting. The goodness of God thus makes His gifts our merits. When we pray rightly, aided by grace, we appeal not for rights from justice but for favors from mercy and goodness, and here there is not condign but only congruous merit or worthiness to be heard and to receive. However, what makes the proportion between our prayer and supernatural favors if received, is the supernatural grace which moved us to pray.

The great Spanish theologian Ripalda uses the following comparison. He says: "Suppose God made a rule or promise to Himself that whenever any corporeal substance on earth would be found to have whiteness in the degree of eight, He would send down fire from heaven to inflame it." Here there is no intrinsic connection between whiteness in the degree of eight and such fire, or between such fire and whiteness in the degree of eight. The only connection between them is extrinsic to them, in the free Will of God making this rule. Similarly, the ultimate reason moving God to give supernatural grace to any one who does what is in his natural power, is entirely extrinsic to these natural acts. It is the mere Will of the Creator who made each soul to be saved. It is the mere Merit of Christ who died that each soul might live eternally. So much has been said to save the Catholic truth that we can not either condignly or congruously merit the first actual grace.

The discussion of this venerable maxim was not brought in for the purpose of studying it in all of its bearings, but by occasion of it to recall Catholic belief and teaching on the abundance with which God distributes His supernatural graces. We have already seen one clear passage from St. Thomas and its understanding by his Dominican and Jesuit commentators, who here are at one. We add the following from the Angelic Doctor:

"God, who gives *to all abundantly*, refuses grace to no one who does what is in himself to prepare himself for grace." (4 dist. 20. q. unic. a. 1. q. 1.)

That is, to prepare himself negatively and take away impediments, not to dispose positively.

"If a man who grew up in the forests, followed the leading of natural reason in the seeking of good and the shunning of evil, it

is to be most certainly held that God either would by an interior inspiration reveal to him those things which are necessary to be believed, or would direct to him some preacher of faith, as He sent Peter to Cornelius, Acts x." (De veritate q. 14. a. 11. ad. 1.)

"That was the true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world." (John i. 9.) If any one wills a good moral act of any kind, his mind must be enlightened to know this goodness which he wills. Now St. Augustine appears to see in this text that any such light in the mind is caused immediately and supernaturally by God, or in other words is always an effect of supernatural grace. On merits and the remission of sins, Book 1. Ch. 23., St. Augustine writes:

"That which is found in the gospel, 'He was the true light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world,' was therefore said because no one of all men is enlightened save by that light of truth which is God. So that no one should think that he is enlightened (so as to learn) by means of him from whom he hears anything. I say that this is not so, though he happen to have as his teacher some great man or even an angel. For the word of truth is inwardly added to the ministry to the corporeal word. However, neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but He who gives the increase, God. Indeed, man hears the man or the angel speaking, but that he may perceive and know that what is said is true, on his mind is inwardly shed that light which abides forever and which shines even in darkness. Thus, the apostles heard our Divine Lord, who spoke as no man ever spoke in Israel, and yet how little they learned and understood until they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Note the terms *every man* that cometh into this world."

We read in the Apocalypse iii. 20: "I stand at the gate and knock. If any man shall hear My voice and open to Me the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with Me." Let us hear some commentaries on this.

Provincial Council of Sens (near Lyons), canon 15: "Such a necessity of grace is no prejudice to free will, since grace is *always* at hand, and there passes *not even one* moment in which God is not standing at the door and knocking, to whom if any one will open the gate He will enter to him."

Since grace is so ready and frequent and continuous at every moment, will it desert the will in any work performed by a man doing all in his power? Will the lack of grace ever make such a work null and void for salvation?

First Provincial Council of Colonge, p. 7, c. 32. tom. 3. Councils pg. 81: "Let no one allege the excuse that he is not attracted, since

God *always* stands before the door knocking, that is, always tenderly uttering His interior and exterior word that we may be converted from our most wicked way, and inclining us, as there is wrath unto the soul of every man doing evil, but glory to every one doing good."

These following testimonies are given in full by Ripalda on the *Supernatural*, Vol. I, page 120, in the edition of 1870. But he thus abridges them on page 158:

Council of Palestine (cited by St. Augustine): "The grace of God is given for every single act."

African Council: "It aids us in every single act."

Council of Orange: "Whenever we do good things, God operates in us and with us that we may operate. Likewise, no good things are done by man which God does not cause that man to do."

Pope Innocent: "The help of God is to be joined to free will in all things. Free will destitute of celestial aids can do nothing."

Pope Zosimus: "In all acts, thoughts, movements, God is to be asked for help. He is proud who presumes by his human natural powers to do anything."

Pope Celestine: "The help of God avails more than the help of our will in each and every good movement of the will."

St. Ambrose: "Everywhere does the power of the Lord co-operate with human efforts."

St. Jerome: "God helps by His grace in every work."

St. Augustine: "No one uses his will well save through grace. Grace aids for every good in action, word, and thought."

St. Prosper: "Whatsoever is done in the good and right actions of a laudable life, is God's. There is no good without the grace of God."

St. Fulgentius: "Every good work which we do is God's, and there is nothing good which we can claim as ours."

St. Anselm: "No man has good will from himself, but from God."

St. Jerome writes to Ctesiphon against Pelagius: "If," says he, "I shall wish to bend my finger, move my hand, sit, stand, walk, converse, etc., will the help of God always be necessary to me?" "Hear, thou ungrateful, nay, thou sacrilegious man, the Apostle preaching, 'whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do, do all things in the Name of the Lord.'"

And this Holy Doctor and most erudite of the Fathers insists that we should ask the help of God, and at that the interior supernatural lights and inspirations of actual graces in the strict sense, to do these common actions. It was not his meaning that without such graces we have not the physical power to do them physically or to do them in such a way that they may have natural moral goodness and be in conformity with our right reason and rational nature, but that without these

supernatural graces we can not do them in such a way that they will have a supernatural goodness and be in conformity with our Christian faith and dignity and our higher second nature or supernatural character, and thus be truly salutary actions and have a proportion to our eternal supernatural salvation which is the destiny of all. However, he here supposes that Almighty God does constantly give us supernatural graces for these acts which are natural, to be done in this supernatural way.

Most of these testimonies have been copied by us from Ripalda, and it is to the point here to consider this acute and pious theologian's special view of their significance. What is his interpretation of the maxim: "To him who does what is in his power God does not refuse grace"? Firstly, he takes "in his power" to mean "in his natural power." Secondly, he holds that "who does what is in his power" refers only to things done deliberately and capable of having moral goodness. Thirdly, he holds that "God does not refuse grace" means that God always gives supernatural grace for each kind of act and for each individual act performed according to right reason and our rational nature. Fourthly (and this is a special opinion of his own), he holds that these Doctors, Fathers, Councils, and texts of Holy Scripture show that such supernatural grace is in the order of causality not merely subsequent or concomitant, but strictly antecedent to every such act of our will. And he appears to have made out a very strong case. It may be a pleasure to the reader to scrutinize these texts as parts and as a whole, and he may be then convinced that Ripalda's generalization is a historic fact, and that his interpretation is only natural and obvious. Thus: "I stand at the gate and knock. If any one will hear My voice and open the door [of his heart] to Me, etc." The standing at the gate and knocking and crying out of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, before the door of the hut of our hearts, is represented as prior or antecedent to any hearing or opening of the door of the heart. And, moreover, Fathers and Councils teach that for each soul He is always standing, etc. The same attitude of God is repeatedly described in the passage from the Book of Wisdom: "She *preventeth* them that covet her; she *first* showeth herself to them; He that awaketh

early to see her shall *find her sitting* at his door. She *showeth* herself to them cheerfully in the ways;" and this leads them to discipline and keeping the commandments, supernatural or natural, and to love, incorruption and nearness to God.

Manifestly, here there is question of helps to salvation which is supernatural, and the helps must also be supernatural, and these helps are for all kinds of good acts supernatural or natural.

Many of the Fathers and Councils appear to be so explicit for Ripalda's view that comment is superfluous.

If this special opinion is not proven, at least its consideration brings out most clearly that Almighty God gives abundant graces to each soul, and that most frequently, not only to do the supernatural things known by faith, but also the natural things knowable by reason. Hence, as is manifest from the Scriptures and tradition and the clear sense of the Church, not only great saints but also unbelievers, great sinners and ordinary Christians have abundant supernatural grace not only to do naturally good moral acts, but also and much more to believe in God and to hope in Him and to love Him with their whole hearts. By "ordinary Christian" we understand one who at least usually is not in a state of mortal sin. He may occasionally fall even into a grievous fault, but with the aid of actual graces he soon heartily repents and rises and is justified by the reception of justifying sanctifying habitual grace, and the Council of Trent explicitly defines that each such soul then receives the virtue of charity or the permanent supernatural power and inclination to make acts of love in the proper and strict sense. Hence, it is manifest that the spirit of sons or the grace to love God is not extraordinary but ordinary and even universal among even those ordinary Christians who are merely free from mortal sin and in the state of grace, and that as the natural God-given spirit of a mother makes it easy for a woman to love and care for her child, this supernatural God-given spirit of sons makes it easy for those sons and daughters of Adam and Eve who have it, to love and serve their good God and kind Father in heaven.

From the Scriptures, Fathers, Councils, Doctors, and other

theologians, we have seen plainly that is so. From other sources we can see that it ought to be so and that it would be strange if it were not so. If God did not give, or at least were not ready to give to those who ask, or who do what is in their natural power, an abundance of grace to love Him, how different He would be in the order of grace from what He is in the order of nature. Man makes a watch or clock to mark the time of day, and he does not leave out the springs or the weights to move the hands. The constructor makes the locomotive to move on the rails and draw the train, and the ship to run on the waters. And he does not leave out the boiler, the fuel, the steam, the sails, or other impelling forces or instruments. God makes the fish to swim, the deer to run, the bird to fly and sing, and He gives them all the organs and forces to do those things. He makes our bodies with hearts to beat, lungs to breathe, eyes to see, and ears to hear, and how admirably He has adapted these organs for their special functions. And with what abundance has He lavished on them air, light, and food, or the means of obtaining the latter from the earth, waters, or air. He made our souls chiefly to know and love Himself here in this short life and hereafter in eternity with Him in His and our heavenly home. And He tells us to take more care of our souls than of our bodies, and He, too, takes more care of our souls than of our bodies, and since He has been so generous in adapting our bodies to their functions and in supplying their necessities, how strange it would be if He had not also attained His end strongly and disposed all things sweetly with regard to our souls and had not made us able to love Him easily and supplied an abundance of grace in the supernatural spiritual lights and fires which are necessities for loving Him and loving Him easily.



## CHAPTER XII

*OUR LITTLENESS AND SINFULNESS DO NOT SHOW  
THAT GOD DOES NOT TAKE CARE OF US  
BY HIS GRACES*

**S**OME of us find it hard to realize or even to believe that the Eternal, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, All-wise, All-holy, All-just, All-good, All-merciful, All-happy, should thus constantly wait on us, watch over us, work for us, who are of yesterday, puny, tiny, ignorant, passionate, obstinate, selfish, wicked, unfair, unjust, ungrateful, spiteful, and hateful. However, I am not so insignificant but that He created this rich and beautiful world for my sake and made me the king of it, and but that He created a far richer and more beautiful place in heaven for my eternal, all happy home. And he gave to me as well as to each soul a special angel to guard me in all my ways from my birth till I am cited before Him to be judged. And "He so loved the world that He gave His Only-Begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish but may have life everlasting." And what a gift! And how wholly given! And how is it that having given me His Son He is not desirous to give me all things?

He selected me to create me with predilection for me over so many others whom He could have made and who would perhaps have been more faithful to His bounty. In Him I live, move and have my being, and if for one moment He withdrew His life-giving, active, and sustaining hand, I would straight be without life or movement in limb, mind, and will, and even without being, and I would fall back into nothing. And He has thus sustained me even when I was abusing His gifts to insult Him by sin. He created me out of nothing, and is more the author of my being than my father and mother. He is the first cause of my body, and gave it to me through my parents, but He created out of nothing the matter from which the first man was formed, and He created my individual soul immediately and out of nothing, and He created it to His own divine image and likeness and for Himself,

and He is closer kin to me, and I to Him, than are my parents to me or I to them.

He created me to be saved. He sent His Son to die that I might be saved. This Son wrought all manner of wondrous deeds of kindness. He made the lame to walk, the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, the poor and bruised of heart to be soothed by the good tidings of hope, love, peace, and joy. By His word He silenced the winds and the waves, by His power He changed water into wine and multiplied the loaves and the fishes to give drink, food, and joy to the thirsty and the hungry. He forgave sins, cleansed lepers, raised the dead to life, and finally died and raised Himself to life on the third day, as He had prophesied. And why? Out of love for me, that I might have reasons to believe in Him and know that He is truth itself, and that I might hope in Him, love Him and be saved.

He went about through city, village, hamlet, and desert, teaching the people and the apostles, and scattering seeds of truth and enforcing it by simple and sublime words and maxims and homely touching parables, and illustrating it by His own perfect example as a model of every virtue for every age and class and for every vicissitude of life. And why? Out of love for me, that these seeds might bear fruit in my heart in this distant age and clime.

He founded His Church on the rock and promised that the gates of hell would never prevail against it, for He would be with it all days even to the consummation of the world. And why? That in it and through it I might have the means and the abundant means to sanctify myself and save my soul and be eternally happy with Him in the heavenly triumphant Church.

He instituted seven sacraments to signify and give graces to my soul. By Baptism I was to be washed in soul, regenerated and born again, and to receive a new supernatural life and share the divine nature, as I shared human nature in my first birth. By Confirmation I was to be strengthened and made a brave, loyal soldier of Christ. By Penance I was to be easily raised from the death of mortal sin into which I might fall after Baptism and lose its new supernatural life. By the Eucharist I was to eat His Flesh and drink His Blood

and live in Him and He in me, and be prepared to be raised up like Him again on the last day. By Extreme Unction I was to be raised up from the bed of sickness, or to be soothed in soul in my last agony, and to have my sins so completely forgiven that I should be ready after death for immediate entry into His glory. By Holy Orders and Matrimony, our pastors and mothers and fathers were to be sanctified.

What was His purpose in instituting each and all of these sanctifying and enlightening things? It was love for me and for all.

And when He died He said that no man hath greater love for his friend than to give his life for his friend. And I can say with St. Paul, "He loved me and delivered Himself for me." He died not only for all races of all ages, but for each individual soul of the race of man. From the cross He looked on me and loved me. The sun shines for all, but shines for each the same as if it shone only for one, and I receive the same graces from His death as if He died for me alone. And one drop of His blood was enough to save the whole world, and more than enough. One sigh of His Sacred Heart would have been sufficient. Even if He had only stooped to the ground and plucked a tiny flower and offered it before the throne of divine justice for all the sins of the human race from Adam to the last man, the Voice of the Eternal Father might have truthfully pronounced the sentence: "The majesty of this Person offering this tiny flower is infinite, and this one act of His in the scales of divine justice itself outweighs all the crimes of His race against Infinite Majesty, and more than amply atones for them." He said that no man hath greater love for his friend than to give his life for his friend. And yet He had greater love even than this for me. He gave His life for His friend on the cross between two thieves in the most painful and ignominious of deaths. St. Augustine asks how many were the insults, the buffets, the strokes of the scourges which He suffered? How many thorns were there in His crown? How many were His wounds and His drops of blood? And he answers, "I know not, but I do know that He suffered each one out of love for me, to show how much He loved me, and that each additional insult, buffet, and lash of the scourges is an additional proof

of how much more He loved me, and that each wound is an open mouth, and each drop of blood a tongue crying out, 'Behold, how I have loved thee.' "

Great, indeed, is the love for us which Our Lord shows in His incarnation, life, passion and death. But His love, as tested by the touchstone of self-sacrifice and humiliation, is in some ways seen more clearly in the sacraments, and especially in the sacrament of sacraments and in the unbloody sacrifice, if, however, there can be a comparison. For the latter are only extensions, effects, and individual applications of the former.

Far be it from us then to make a comparison between the Blessed Sacrament and the Incarnation, as if they were wholly different and independent. But in some respects we can compare them. In the Incarnation we see Him who was in the beginning, consubstantial with God the Father, and who was God, and by whom all things were made, for us men and for our salvation, coming from the Bosom of His Father and from heaven where all the angels say "Holy, Holy, Holy," through the ages, veiling their faces with their wings, down to the earth like light into darkness, among His own who received Him not, and taking the form of a slave. But, yet, this form of a slave was a man, and the most beautiful of the sons of men.

In the Eucharist the same Majesty comes down to earth and takes the humbler form of bread, a thing even without life.

There He came down once. Here He comes down every day and at every moment of the day, and He is a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech.

There He came down in one place, and here He comes down in every part of the world, and this clean offering is offered from the rising to the setting of the sun, and even the sun never sets on it.

Then He was subjected to Mary and Joseph to be carried to and fro to Egypt, to Nazareth in Galilee, to Jerusalem. Here He is subjected to the priest to be carried to any hovel and to any vile sinner.

There He came down at the command of the Eternal Father with the songs of the angels. Here He comes down at the tinkling of a small bell at the bidding of the priest

who is a mere man and may be not only ignorant, but even a Judas, and yet He obeys his bidding, and when he says, come, He cometh.

There He came down into the bosom of Mary Immaculate, and here He comes down into your bosom and mine.

He who loves not only wishes good to the beloved and that good be imparted to the beloved, but that he may be with the beloved and personally impart this good. Some mothers give their babes out to be nursed, but Our Lord wishes to be Himself with each one of us and to feed us with His own Flesh and Blood.

Why then, should it be hard for us to believe and realize that God imperceptibly gives abundant graces of illuminations and inspirations to the minds and wills of our individual souls? Father Florentine Boudreaux in his book, "God Our Father," tells us that this spirit of incredulity that God specially cares and works for us, is, according to his observation and experience, the chief difficulty in the way of a soul heartily loving God. Therefore, by repeating other commonplaces, we will further insist on truths bearing upon this difficulty.

In the preceding pages we have answered the objection expressed in the question: Am I not too insignificant for God to be constantly personally giving me the abundance of His graces to do acts which are salutary, and to be personally urging me forward in each one of my steps in my journey on the way to my heavenly home, and to be dilating my heart so that by acts of love I may joyfully run and even fly in the way of His comandmments, counsels and inspirations?

We will now consider the objection contained in the question, Am I not too sinful for God to be thus working for me? The mercy of God is beyond all His works. But He is infinite in each one of His attributes, and is free to exercise now one and now another according to His own wisdom. If we took the position that He is obliged to always exercise His mercy, to be consistent we should have to hold that He is also obliged always to exercise His justice, since He is as infinite in the one as in the other attribute.

As a fact God never does forgive a sin or remit the temporal or eternal punishment due to it except in view of actual sufferings which are accepted as a reparation for the disorder

in that sin. Even when we gain a plenary indulgence plenary, or the full remission of all the temporal or purgatorial sufferings due to our mortal and venial sins after the guilt of each one has been remitted through proper penance for it, this remission is only on account of the sufferings of Christ, His Blessed Mother, and His saints. They suffered pains. Our Lord and His mother had no sins of their own to satisfy for. Many of the saints did not need sufferings, or at least all those which they endured, to repair for their own faults. There is a communion of saints. In the Church of God there is communication of holy persons and holy things. But every one of us will be judged by his own works. No one can properly merit for me. I am not holier in God's eyes for the holiness in the act of any saint to whom I am near and dear. He can not give me his merits which are merits in the proper sense, and no one but myself by my own works or good acts of my will can prepare me to be saved or to be higher in heaven.

But *satisfactory* merits can be communicated. God sees these satisfactory merits of Christ and the saints and remembers them and may accept them in reparation for our sins. This is the concept of the treasury of the Church, the treasury of the merits, i. e., the satisfactory merits of Christ and the saints. The Church has power to forgive sins and to remit guilt and eternal punishment, and it is still easier to believe that she also has power to remit what is a less debt, or that of temporal punishment due after guilt and eternal punishment are remitted. But since the Church has power to remit these debts of temporal sufferings only because the sufferings of Our Lord and the saints are applied and accepted in substitution for sufferings due from us, it is clear that even in the case of a plenary indulgence plenary gained, there is an exercise of divine justice which is thus always fully satisfied.

In extolling the divine mercy there is no need to deny or doubt truth plainly taught by Our Lord and the Church. And we know from the Gospel and an ecumenical council and the Athanasian Creed that the torment of hell is eternal. To believe and realize this truth that there is a hell, and that it is eternal, is the safest means not to go there, and to teach it is the safest means of saving others from going there.

Some may object: I am a father and I would not permit my little child to go near the river if I knew he would fall in and be drowned. But this objection is based on the false supposition that he who falls into hell is in every way like a child without reason. Whereas, Almighty God does not permit any one to fall into hell unless he has had the use of reason and abused it, and has rebelled against His law grievously, wilfully, deliberately, and premeditatedly with malice prepense, and unless he has refused to repent up to the last lucid moment of his life, and has thus leaped into the bottomless fiery pit knowing that from it there is no rescue.

These same objectors usually advocate the liberty and even the license of the press and many other so-called liberties which are so widely abused.

Again, these objectors suppose that they are fathers in every way like Almighty God. They are not judges and custodians of public order, and He is the custodian of universal order, and what a difference between their sanctity and His, between His and their abomination for sin. We grant, indeed, that with our puny minds we can not see all of His reasons for His laws and their sanctions and that here there is a mystery, but we in reason should believe this truth because He who can neither deceive nor be deceived has taught it to us.

Again, we do not claim that there is mercy and forgiveness for sin which is unrepented. And there is no repentance without sorrow and hatred of soul for sin committed, with a firm purpose of not sinning anew. And neither is there serious repentance if injustice and injury have been done and restitution or reparation are possible and not made.

But with these explanations it is to be insisted that there is no limitation to God's mercy and forgiveness to sinners. Few, if any, of Catholic doctrines have been as often or so furiously attacked as those pertaining to the sacrament of Penance and the confessional. As Cardinal Manning said, they are like the cloud and pillar of fire which guided the people of God day and night through the desert and hid and sheltered them from their foes. It was all darkness to those without, and all light, joy and confidence to those within.

The characteristic tenderness of the Catholic Church not

only to every form of human misery, but also to every kind and number of sinners is a beautiful mark or note on the brow of the one true spouse of Christ, and manifests her as having the spirit of Him who came only for sinners and only to heal the bruised in heart.

In the early ages of the Church there arose a sect saying that there are some sins so enormous that there is no forgiveness for them, or rather that the Church has not the power to loose and remit them in the sacrament of Penance. And this error was even upheld by one who had shown himself the most eloquent champion of the Church in his day. But there arose others more soberly and profoundly learned in the Scriptures and the apostolic traditions, and they asked: Did not Our Lord say, "whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven them," without any exception of any persons or sinners? And did He not say, "whatsoever things ye shall loose on earth, they shall be loosed in heaven," without any exception of any sins? And Rome thundered her anathema across the Mediterranean to Africa against any one who thus dared to restrict the power of the Church in the tribunal of mercy.

St. Augustine, reviewing this controversy in which Montanus, Novatian, and Tertullian were cut off from the visible body of the Church, says that in all the Scriptures there is no question more difficult than that referring to the following texts:

"Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men, but the blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him either in this world or in the world to come." (Matt. xii. 31, 32.)

"He that knoweth his brother to sin a sin which is not to death, let him ask and life shall be given to him that sinneth not to death. There is a sin unto death; for that I say not that any man ask." (1 John v. 16.)

"For if we sin wilfully after having the knowledge of the truth, there is now left no sacrifice for sins, but a certain dreadful expectation of judgment and the rage of a fire which shall consume the adversaries." (Heb. x. 26, 27.)

We say the great Doctor of Hippo tells us that there are no parts of the Scripture more difficult than these and similar texts (serm. 71. c. 5), but he asks why are they so diffi-



cult, and he answers that it is because on their face they seem to contradict the well-known teaching and practice of the Church and the plain teaching of the Scriptures themselves in other places where there can be no doubt or dispute about the proper interpretation.

Not even these heretics denied the power or will of God to forgive any sin which is duly repented of, but denied this power in certain cases only to the Church.

"As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the sinner, but that the wicked turn from his way and live." "And the wickedness of the wicked shall not hurt him, in what day soever he shall turn from his wickedness." (Ezech. xxxiii. 11, 12.)

"And it shall come to pass that every one that shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Joel ii. 32.)

"If your sins be as scarlet they shall be made white as snow, and if they be red as crimson they shall be white as wool." (Is. i. 18.)

In these and many other places of the Scriptures God declares that He on His side is always ready to remit all and any sins, and that nothing will ever hinder Him on the side of the sinner but impenitence. And whatever be the specific sins which *will* not be forgiven, whether they be sins founded on voluntary mental blindness, or on contempt for the means of being cured, or any others for which penitence is rare, or practically never or almost never actually occurs, the universal reason of their not being forgiven is final impenitence.

Hence, Almighty God and His Church ask all sinners, What is your sin? Is it theft or robbery? St. Matthew was not only forgiven for this, but immediately called to be one of the twelve apostles and the first of the four evangelists. Is it murder or adultery? David committed them both in aggravating heinous circumstances, and yet he was forgiven and made one of the most favored prophets and saints and the ancestor of a long line of glorious kings and even of the King of Kings, who was David's son. Is it apostasy, or treachery, or hatred and persecution of the Church? These were all forgiven in St. Peter and St. Paul, and Our Lord was ready to forgive even the traitor Judas. We can scarcely name a sin for which some one of the canonized saints was not for a time conspicuous.

And when is Almighty God ready to forgive us? The very second that in our will or heart we turn to Him. As soon

as David said to Nathan, "I have sinned to the Lord," Nathan said to David, "The Lord also hath taken away thy sin." (2 Kings xii. 13.) As soon as the publican standing afar off with eyes cast down and bowed head, beat his breast and said, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner," he went down justified. As soon as Dismas, the thief, near his last gasp on the death-bed of the cross, said, "Lord, remember me when Thou shalt be in Thy kingdom," the quick reply came back from the lips of Our Lord, "This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

We invite our friend to a feast for one date, and if he does not then respond he may not be invited again. We do not spread a feast whenever he may choose to come to us. But the King of Kings always, at each moment of our life, stands at the door of our sinful heart, and knocks and cries out, and tells us that if we will only hear His voice and open the door He will deign to come in and sup with us and spread a great feast so that we may sup with Him. Even though we have kept Him waiting a whole long lifetime and open our door to Him only at the last moment, like the dying thief, He will never say, It is too late, you have made Me wait too long, I will not enter now. No, He says: "The wickedness of the wicked shall not hurt him in what day soever he shall turn from his wickedness."

And the Church, too, is quick to forgive as soon as she finds a serious reason for believing that the sinner has in his heart a deep sadness and hate for his sin, with a firm purpose not to sin anew. For some more enormous crimes she sometimes inflicts her extreme penalty of excommunication, cuts off her child from her communion, and withdraws from him all participation in the spiritual gifts of which she has the distribution. Some of these erring children at times have imagined that they are thus made by their Mother outcasts forever. Cases have happened of men and women becoming such victims of this pernicious error that at the hour of death they did not call in a priest of the Church of God to reconcile them with the Church and God. They thought it was no use, that no priest would come to them, that the sacraments were not for them even at death, and they died in despair. Nothing is further from the truth. Tender Mother Church from time immemorial, according to a custom which is universal, has

ever authorized every priest to absolve those in danger of death from any and every excommunication or other censure, provided they are penitent. In all the books of canon law, excommunication is taught to be primarily not punitive but medicinal. This extremest of penalties is our strong Mother's strongest medicine to awaken in the soul of her child sadness and hate for enormous crime committed and a firm purpose not to commit it anew. It is the most merciful means to bring that criminal soul to beg mercy and forgiveness from God and the Church, and when that heart is contrite and humiliated it will not be despised by its Mother. Those who are excommunicated are rarely fully instructed on the laws of the Church. After enormous crimes they easily absent themselves from Mass and Catholic sermons and lectures, neglect Catholic literature and associations, become more and more ignorant of their religion, and fall under the influence of companions who do not know or love the Church. Sermons on the mercy of God to sinners should always explain the Church's own idea and purpose in excommunication. After such an explanation how often it happens that the preacher shortly after leaving the pulpit is called to the parlor or to the confessional to reconcile and save some unfortunate soul that had long been in despair, and that would have lived and died in despair but for that timely public explanation.

God and the Church are not only ready to forgive any sin and any sinner immediately at any moment when there is penance, but they are ready to forgive completely. Many of us truly forgive those who have injured or insulted us, and yet do not at first forgive completely. With modern antiseptics flesh wounds made by an enemy's bullet or dagger, or the surgeon's friendly knife, may be quickly healed, but hearts cut by sharp, venomous tongues, even after an apology, remain sore much longer. Only time can perfectly heal them. How beautiful magnanimity which immediately forgives and forgets! We sometimes see it, especially in nature's noblemen endowed with a mighty physique, a great intelligence, and a big heart. Those who are physically weak and mentally small are as a class the slowest to forgive, and when they do forgive they are the slowest to forget or to act like those who have forgotten. Mercy is mightiest in the mightiest. God

is infinite in each one of His attributes, but His mercy is beyond all His works. "With the Lord there is mercy." The favored home of mercy is not in the heart of a human royal saint like King Louis, or in the heart of a human father or mother toward a penitent prodigal son. "With the Lord there is mercy and with Him plentiful redemption. From the morning watch even until the night, let Israel hope in the Lord."

Jonas cried out from the belly of the monster and the depths of the sea, and his God of heaven heard his voice and had mercy on his sin of disobedience and delivered him. Though great as the sea be our misery, though we be far from God and heaven in the depths of sin, if we cry out to Him, He forthwith hears our voice and His ears are attentive to our supplication. Let not only the people of Israel but every soul hope in the Lord. From the morning watch even until the night, aye, and all through the night. From the morn of prosperity and health to and through the night of adversity and sickness; from the morn of lightsome consolations to and through the soul's obscure night of desolation; from the morn of joyous youth to the eve of decrepit old age and the night of death; from the morn of grace to and through the night of sin, every soul has good cause to hope in the Lord. Why? Because He has mercy on us according to His great mercy, and according to the multitude of His tender mercies He blots out our iniquities.

Luther and his school denied that God ever blots out our iniquities and forgives our sins completely. They said that He only covers them up and does not impute them for punishment, that He does not really justify and sanctify our souls intrinsically but only extrinsically by the mere extrinsic imputation of the merits of Christ. A man, let us suppose, has committed the crime of murder. The jury acquits him, or the president or the governor pardons him. The jury, or president, or governor, by acquittal or pardon does not take away from the soul of that murderer the guilt of the crime of Cain, and neither does God take away from the soul of the sinner the guilt of original sin or of actual mortal sin. His pardon is only extrinsic imputation of the merits of Christ and extrinsic non-imputation of sin for punishment.

At the end of these paragraphs we will solve this objection

by explanations and direct answers. But let us first hear on it the teachings of the Church, the Scriptures, the Fathers and the Catholic theologians. We will not treat this point fully here, but we will dwell on it at some length. It closely touches the very possibility of God's loving us as friends, as worthy of love for what we truly are in ourselves.

That Lutheran error called forth the following teachings of the Council of Trent:

"This disposition or preparation is followed by justification itself, which is not merely the remission of sins but also the *sanctification* and renewal of the *inward man*, through the voluntary reception of grace and of the gifts whereby man from *unjust* becomes *just*, and of an *enemy a friend*, that so he may be an heir according to hope of life everlasting. Of this justification the causes are three. The final cause is indeed the glory of God and of Jesus Christ, and life everlasting; while the efficient cause is a merciful God who *washes and sanctifies* gratuitously, signing and anointing with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the pledge of our inheritance. But the meritorious cause is His most Beloved Only-Begotten, our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when we were enemies, for the exceeding charity wherewith He loved us, merited justification for us by His most holy passion on the wood of the cross, and made satisfaction for us unto God the Father. The instrumental cause is the sacrament of Baptism, which is the sacrament of faith, without which [faith] no man was ever justified. Lastly, the formal cause is the justice of God, not that whereby He Himself is just, but that whereby He *maketh us just*, that is to say, with which we being endowed by Him are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and we are *not only reputed but are truly called and are just, receiving justice within us*, each one according to his own measure, which the Holy Ghost distributes to every one as He wills. For although no one can be just but He to whom the merits of the passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ are communicated, yet *this is done* in the said justification of the impious when by the merit of the same most holy passion *the charity of God is poured forth* by the Holy Spirit *in the hearts* of those *that are justified* and is inherent therein." (Session 6, chapter 7.)

In order to follow the thread of our remarks, the reader does not need to master each one of the clauses of this decree. It will be enough for him to note only those clauses which we have italicized. In them he will see the doctrine of the Church that when we receive the gift of habitual grace which remits original sin or actual mortal sin, our souls are justified and sanctified intrinsically.

The following canon 5, of session 5, is perhaps still more explicit:

"If any one denies that the *guilt* of original sin is remitted by the grace of Jesus Christ which is conferred in Baptism, or also asserts that that *whole thing* which has the nature of sin is not taken away, but says that it is *only razed* or *not imputed*, let him be anathema."

Here, indeed, there is directly question only of justification from original sin in Baptism, but all justification by any instrumental means and from any sins is of the same intrinsic nature, according to the Catholic doctrine, and all is by the infusion of sanctifying grace.

In support of the error of mere extrinsic justification, Luther and Calvin brought forward such texts as Psalm xxxi. 1, Ezech. xxxiii. 16, 2 Cor. v. 19, wherein Almighty God is said to cover up and not to impute our iniquities. But the easy and conclusive answer of the Catholic theologians was that God does cover up our iniquities, but covers them up from His own eyes, to which "all things are naked and open," and what He has thus covered up is *blotted* out and *destroyed*, has *no* existence and is *nothing*, else it would be seen by His eyes. And this is the interpretation of those texts by the Fathers. Thus, St. Augustine, in his second sermon on the Thirty-first Psalm, says:

"As the physician covers wounds with a plaster and *heals* them, so God covers up our sins, and we must not understand this as if the covered sins there *still exist* and *live*, for they are concealed, and from *whom?* From Him who knows *all* things."

For the sake of abundance we submit the following additional texts of St. Augustine against the Pelagians, 1 Ep. 13, n. 26.

"They say that Baptism does not give indulgence for all sins, and does not take away crimes, but shaves them so that the roots of all sins are retained in the evil flesh." And he replies: "Who affirms this but an infidel? We say, therefore, that Baptism gives indulgence for all sins and takes away and does not shave crimes, and that it takes them away in such a manner that the roots of sins are not retained in the evil flesh, like hairs shaved on the head, whence the sins grow again to be cut off anew."

Says St. Gregory the Great, Ep. xi. 45:

"If there are any who say that in Baptism sins are remitted superficially, what is greater infidelity than such preaching? Whoever

says that in Baptism sins are not remitted fundamentally, must say that in the Red Sea the Egyptians did not truly die. But if he acknowledge that the Egyptians were truly dead, it is necessary that he acknowledge that in Baptism sins are fundamentally dead. Because, indeed, in our absolution our truth is stronger than the shadow of the truth. In the Gospel Our Lord says: 'Whoever has been washed does not need to wash but he is clean wholly.' (John xiii. 10.) Therefore, if in Baptism sins are not remitted fundamentally, how is he who has been washed clean wholly? For he can not be said to be clean wholly in whom something of sin remains. But no one resists the voice of Truth: 'He who has been washed is clean wholly.' Therefore, nothing of the contagion of sin remains to him who is confessed to be clean wholly by Him who redeemed us."

St. Thomas gives this reason, which is not to be spurned:

"Otherwise the malice of man would have more power in sinning and removing divine grace than the divine goodness to remove sins by the gifts of grace."

It is a fact that the Scriptures in some places speak of sins forgiven as covered over and as not imputed. But this is not all that the Scriptures tell us of sins forgiven. In other places other things are added. Sin is taken away, transferred, made far off, destroyed, cleansed, washed off, as filth and stains are destroyed, they are purged, the man who is justified is washed and whitened like the snow, is made a new man, created over as if what had been was nothing, was annihilated. Sins are wounds, weaknesses, diseases, and are said to be healed. They are a death which is excluded by the conferring of a new life, by resuscitation. The state of sin is the state of darkness, and the state of grace and justice the state of light. Justification consists not merely in the remission of sin but also in the renovation of the interior man. The angels and our first parents who had no sin were justified by grace. Justification is described as a regeneration, renovation, resurrection to a new life. Christ came to make us holy, stainless, just, not to merely cover our leprosy of sin by a clean garment or our scarlet crime with a white robe, but to make us clean and white.

Luther granted and contended that if all are just only by the extrinsically imputed justice of Christ, then all the justified are equal in sanctity. He explicitly stated that he accepted the conclusion that he was as holy before God as St. Peter,

St. Paul, or the Virgin Mary. This absurd sequence manifests the absurdity of the premise that justice and sanctity are only extrinsic to our souls.

In the crime of murder we see the offense of God. We see also an offense of the State. This is another offense of God. He who resists the authority of the State resists God, from whom all authority is derived. Besides, we see the punishment for murder assigned by God and by the State respectively. The jury may acquit, the president or the governor may pardon. They can not absolve from the guilt in the offense of God or in that of the State itself. God has not given to any of them the power to remit the debt of guilt or punishment incurred toward Himself. The criminal thus acquitted or pardoned by a secular power is justified only outwardly, extrinsically. His crime is not imputed for the punishments inflicted by the secular law. But God has power to remit the punishment and the guilt of this crime, and He has also the power to make a change in the soul of the murderer, to make him the sharer of His own divine nature, His friend, His adopted son, His heir and co-heir with Jesus Christ His Only-Begotten Son. A human king might have the power to forgive a human officer who has made an attempt on the good king's life, and he might have the power even to restore this officer to his former rank, pay, fortune, and even make him his own son and heir. The Divine King besides has the power to give the traitor's soul a new birth, a royal nature, to regenerate it and make it a sharer of the divine nature. This is what God actually does when He forgives us our mortal sins. He not only forgives all our sins no matter how heinous, and forgives them immediately no matter how long we have put Him off, but He also forgives them thus completely, so that truly He is our Friend and we are His friends.

Before we sinned mortally we may have lived in the state of grace a long time and done many good things known and believed to be such by faith in God's revealed word. We may have thus acquired many merits in His sight and run up a rich account with Him whom we trusted and to whom we confided this deposit. Our soul may have been before Him like a fair orange orchard, and its many trees planted,



guarded and fostered by long years of watching, care and labor, may be covered with fragrant foliage and blossoms and fruits, each with its own fair beauty, sweet odor, and luscious taste. One mortal sin was like one cold night blizzard. It killed all those fruits, blossoms, and leaves, and shriveled all those branches and stocks, and left only the roots alive, the roots like faith, the root of justification. But God when He forgives us, by His loving breath, more powerful than the deadly blizzard of sin, revives all those fruits of charity, blossoms of hope, and leaves of outward practices of piety, and restores all of our former merits. This last point is not found explicitly in the decrees of the Councils, but it is taught by gravest theologians for gravest reasons which have not yet been answered, and are unanswerable.

We commit many mortal sins and acquire many demerits. We do penance and are forgiven, and all those sins and all their demerits are blotted out. We then relapse unto our former sins. Are those previous demerits thence revived? By no means. No theologian says so or can say so. God's mercy is beyond all His works. He exercises His mercy more than His justice. According to His merciful rule and plan, our demerits do not revive with our fall, but our merits do revive with our rise.

What privileges granted to the returned prodigal so as almost to make the ever faithful son envious! What special tenderness lavished on the strayed sheep brought back to the fold in the arms of the Good Shepherd! What joys in heaven over one sinner doing penance beyond the joys over ninety-nine just who need not penance! What special privileges granted to Zachaeus, Matthew, Magdalen, Peter, Paul, Augustine, and to other great sinners who loved much because much had been forgiven them.

The manner in which God brings us back from sin to grace and forgiveness is perhaps the most touching feature of His mercy to sinners. A father sees his daughter drowning in a river, struggling and going down for the last time. He then little thinks of gentleness of manner toward that frail girl, but clutches her by the arm, the foot, the hair, or rudely pushes her to the shore. He cares not if he hurts or stuns her so he saves her in the end. Even in saving our souls

from the abyss of sin and hell, the manner of God is most delicately considerate of our character, disposition, and feelings. He resolved to convert David and inspired Nathan with all the arts of insinuating, persuasive eloquence. David had been a shepherd boy and loved sheep, had risked his life for them and had fought and suffocated a bear and a lion and delivered his sheep from their mouths. He was a brave soldier and loved a combat with a giant like Goliath, and despised imposition of the rich and mighty on the poor and weak. He loved fairness and hated injustice. Nathan considered all these things and made the sweet plea beginning with the parable of the pet ewe lamb which the poor man fed from his board and gave to drink from his cup and warmed in his bosom and loved as a daughter. And this all in the Old Law.

Our Lord in public was often the Lion of Juda, but in dealing with individuals He was generally the Lamb of God. He, indeed, used stern words to some individual souls, but we do not read of one instance of His converting any soul except by kindness and gentleness of manner. How gentle and sympathetic are some confessors to the most wicked criminals kneeling down, beating their breasts, confessing crimes unknown to detectives and revealing their past most secret, criminal, shameful thoughts, plans, desires known only to themselves and God. However, no confessor will ever equal the tenderness to confessing sinners uniformly shown them by the Son of Mary.

"The Scribes and the Pharisees bring unto Him a woman taken in adultery, and they set her in the midst and said to Him, Master, this woman is even now taken in adultery. Now, Moses in the law commanded us to stone such a one. But what sayest Thou? But Jesus bowing Himself down, wrote with His finger on the ground. When, therefore, they continued asking Him, He lifted up Himself and said to them: He that is without sin amongst you let him cast the first stone at her. And again stooping down He wrote on the ground. But they hearing this went out one by one beginning at the eldest. And Jesus alone remained and the woman standing in the midst. Then Jesus lifting Himself up said to her: Woman, where are they that condemned thee? Hath no man condemned thee? Who said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said, Neither will I condemn thee. Go and sin no more." (John viii. 3. sq.)

This sketch of the sweetness of Our Lord defending this

poor wretch and touching her heart and leading her to penance so that the Son of God does not condemn her and she is forgiven, this sketch of sweetness of manner drawn by the few strokes of the pen of the apostle of love leaves nothing for us to add.

Our Lord wished to thoroughly convert Magdalen, the woman who was a sinner in the city, a public woman. He permitted her to enter the banquet hall, accepted all of her womanly affectionate demonstrations, defended her against the Pharisees, sounded her praises and accepted the kiss of her impure lips which did not defile His sacred feet, but the virtue that went out from His sacred feet purified her impure heart and soul and made her worthy to be more intimately familiar with Him than any woman save His Immaculate Mother.

Zachaeus, who was low of stature, was so eager to see Our Lord that he climbed up on the sycamore tree whence he could look over the shoulders and heads of those taller than himself. And Our Lord, condescending to the desire of Zachaeus, invited Himself to his house and hospitality, and by granting this coveted honor and pleasure converted Zachaeus to honesty and to charity toward God and man.

Levi, the publican, was seated at his counting-table gloating over his hoard of gold and silver coins, many of them ill-gotten. Our Lord looks at him with His own loving look, and says, "Come, follow Me," selects him for the highest honor of the apostleship, for co-operating with the Son of God in preaching the Gospel and founding the Church, sanctifying and saving souls, laying up treasures in heaven, and being the light of the world and the salt of the earth. Thus did He make Matthew out of Levi and convert him from love of self and filthy lucre to love of God and souls and heaven.

How did Our Lord convert Peter? By looking at him with love. And what penance did He demand for Peter's triple denial of his Master? The only reparation asked was a triple confession of love for Himself, His lambs, and His sheep.

What sweetness in the words which converted St. Paul. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Our Lord did everything to convert Judas except the use of harshness. He washed his feet, took sup-

per with him, admonished him that he was known, would not openly denounce him to Peter, who stood behind John with his sleeve rolled up and his right hand clutching a sharp knife for the traitor, permitted the treacherous kiss and sweetly called him by his name, "O Judas, O friend."

How many hungry Our Lord fed, how many sick He healed. These kindnesses were chiefly designed to touch hearts and convert souls. Advocates before the jurymen, speakers in popular assemblies accommodate themselves to the views, likes, and dislikes of their hearers in order to win their favor. They stoop to each one in order to conquer his mind and will. How much more artfully does Almighty God, who sees our hearts, adapt Himself to our various characters, dispositions, conditions, and ambitions in order to attract us to hate for sin and love for Himself. He says to our souls: Are you sick, do you long for health, life, pleasure? Come to Me and I will give you eternal life and saturate you with torrents of delights. Are you destitute, do you long for wealth? Follow Me and you will have treasure in heaven, where no moth or rust corrodes, no thief steals. You will receive a hundredfold of graces and happiness even in this life and in the future you will be kings and queens seated on thrones. Are you abandoned, despised by men? Are you ambitious for friends, dignities, power, honors? Come to Me, I will be your friend here and hereafter, your friend who is Almighty, who can help you here and at the hour of death and after death, your friend who will always be true and not false like men. And I who am all wise, all rich, almighty and all good, will honor you for eternity, and all My angels and saints will honor and love you, and My will shall be yours and yours mine. Have you been feeding the flames of your passions which have thus grown all the greedier and fiercer? Come to Me, take up My cross and follow Me; deny yourself and be like Me, meek, humble, and clean of heart and poor in spirit, and you will find rest for your souls, for your intelligence in My truth, for your longings in My hope, for all your desires in My infinite goodness which alone can completely satisfy them and fill them with the joy and peace proper to your immortal spirit and its infinite capacity for happiness.

These topics are commonplaces in pious books on the divine mercy toward sinners. But some readers might not have these books at hand or might not be willing to open them. It is for this reason that we have dwelt on these simple considerations which impress us with the truth that God does not yet love us as friends when we are not friends but enemies, and still that He does love all of us created to His image and likeness out of nothing, and redeemed by the precious blood of His Son to be saved. Even though we are prodigals He is the Good Father, even though we are straying sheep He is the Good Shepherd, even though we are the stripped and wounded half-dead traveler, He is the Good Samaritan, even though we shut the door of our heart to Him and turn a deaf ear to His crying out and knocking, He stands at the door, waits and begs to be let in that He may sup with us and we with Him.

When we allow our minds to be troubled by the objection, "I am too insignificant or too sinful for God thus to work for me individually, in order to win my heart and make me His friend," we overlook the truth that God can do this with as little effort as that of the sun in shining on each one of us, and that His ultimate reason for loving us is in His own goodness and the merits of His Son.

We submit that we have proved to a demonstration the proposition: The quality and quantity of God's interior graces cause acts of love to be easy and common.

## CHAPTER XIII

### *IT IS EASY AND COMMON TO HAVE HATE AND SADNESS FOR SINS COMMITTED WITH THE PURPOSE OF NOT SINNING ANEW*

OUR main proposition is that love for God above all things for His own sake and perfect contrition are easy for all resolved to avoid mortal sin. We mean for all who have attrition. But is attrition itself easy? If it is not, then love and contrition are not easy. Hence the propriety of here explaining difficulties which lurk in some minds against the easiness of attrition.

As we have seen, the ideas contained in the words "attrition" and "contrition" are found in the Scriptures and Fathers and have always existed in the Church. The words themselves antedate the age of St. Thomas, who lucidly explained them. They are found, as we have seen, in the decrees and canons of the Council of Trent. The long drawn-out post-Reformation and post-Tridentine controversies between Catholics on the one side and Protestants, Jansenists, etc., on the other, and among Catholics themselves, have contributed to these ideas being still more clearly understood.

The word "compunction" embodies the lesson that sorrow for sin is similar to the painful puncturing of a sore, as with a needle or lancet, in order to relieve it of its corrupt matter.

As St. Thomas remarks, the words "attrition" and "contrition" convey the lesson that sorrow for sin is like crushing the heart, and that attrition is like breaking into fragments which are not the most minute, and that contrition is like crushing into particles which are the smallest possible. Thus, a huge piece of anthracite coal is delivered at the mouth of the mine. Then it may be crushed into lump coal, egg coal, pea coal, dust coal; it may be even reduced to ashes. The Church sings in the "*Dies Irae*," "*Cor contritum quasi cinis*"—"My heart crushed like ashes." Perhaps, the example of gold ore may be better for our present purpose. The ore is dug out of the mine. It is then crushed by a powerful force and made

ready to be washed or sifted. All base alloy is thus separated from it and the pure gold is ready to be formed into bullion, or plate, or coin, or vessels, or ornaments. Hate and sadness for sins committed, crush the heart more perfectly in proportion to the motive. And the most crushing force, the most powerful of all the motives, is charity, the consideration that one mortal sin is such that by its nature it broke friendship with God, our infinitely good Father, whom we now love above all things for His own sake. This fire of love in a soul which has committed mortal sin makes the heart crushed like ashes and the most ready to be purified by God's grace from the base and debasing matter of guilty desire.

Poor worms of the earth, with our free will we have in ourselves and of ourselves power to insult infinite majesty. All creatures before God are less in dignity than a drop to the ocean, are as if they were not, and all created persons together by austere penances of thousands of years could not honor God sufficiently to repair the dishonor to Him in my one mortal sin. But the Infinite Second Person of the Blessed Trinity became man, my Brother, Friend, Mediator, Redeemer, and died on the cross that I might be forgiven. God has accepted the death of His Son to redeem His sinful slave. The honor to God by this Infinite Person can with rigor of justice repair the dishonor to Infinite Majesty by my sin. Moreover, Christ merited the supernatural actual graces by which the Holy Spirit impels, moves me to love God, and supernatural habitual grace by which the Holy Spirit abides in me, justifying, sanctifying me. I freely co-operate with the impulse to love given me by the Holy Spirit. I freely accept the gift of His sanctifying grace. Then God is the primary, active, efficient cause of this act of love, and I am the secondary, active, efficient cause. Christ is the primary meritorious cause of the Holy Spirit's actual and habitual grace. I merit life everlasting as a crown of justice, which the just Judge will give to me because I have loved Him and kept His commandments. By my acts I move Him to reward them. However, Christ is the primary meritorious cause and I am only the secondary. I am only the tiny branch and He is the Infinite Vine. My part in my good act, in doing it or meriting by it, is so trifling in comparison to the efficacy

of the Holy Spirit and the merits of Christ, that it is sometimes, and in a true sense, called nothing at all—that is, comparatively.

“The grace of God has not been void in me. I have labored more than all the other Apostles, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.” I have labored strenuously and merited much, have freely co-operated, but the grace of God, its activity and meritoriousness are so great that I can say in a true sense, it is not I but the grace of God with me that has labored and merited. If we add the consideration that my free will and all the faculties of my soul and all the powers of my body which my free will can move to do a good act, are also the gratuitous gift of God, my Creator out of nothing, the great part of God as the first, efficient cause of my every free good act, becomes still more manifest.

The Catholic child is trained to devoutly recite morning and evening the following Act of Hope:

“O my God, relying on Thy infinite goodness and promises, I hope to obtain pardon for my sins, the assistance of Thy grace and life everlasting through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer.”

How is it that by my good act I can merit life everlasting? Is it apart from the merits of Christ? No. Is it apart from the goodness and promises of God? No. Is it apart from the assistance of supernatural grace, grace which is grace, a favor, and which is supernatural and transcends not only my natural physical capacity but also my natural exigencies or claims? No. I lend a hundred dollars to a stranger who has no claim on me, or I do a hundred dollars worth of work for him. He owes me a hundred dollars by the justice which observes equality between thing and thing, between the value of the thing given or done and the value of the thing received. A wealthy king confides five talents to an alien child to be used in the king's service. The child administers this sum like a faithful agent or servant. The king adopts this child as his son and heir and as a sharer of all the king's wealth and honor and power and happiness. There is not strictest equality, and yet there is proportion between the value of what I give



and of what I receive. All comparisons limp, and this one does too. That king had not given the child life, movement and being, and in God "we live and move and have our being." In every good act God gives us "to will and to accomplish." It is the goodness of God that His gifts are our merits, says St. Augustine. Luther blasphemously asserted that God was as much the author of the treason of Judas as of the conversion of Paul. A recent Protestant writer has asserted that as the essential *ratio cognoscendi* of Protestantism is private judgment, so the essential *ratio essendi* of Protestantism is the absence of all merit from all human acts. It was thought well to here obviate impressions possibly made on many minds by the latter Protestant maxim through different branches of English literature, and to thus briefly sketch the Catholic doctrine on merit and explain how the act of love or contrition operates to justify and sanctify our souls and merit life everlasting. Thus, then, it is that when we have been in the state of mortal sin and have been enemies of God and have deserved hell, and make an act of perfect contrition, God not only ceases to be our enemy, but also becomes our Friend and makes us His heirs, and thus it is that He loves those who love Him. Thus we get a little inkling of the process by which God washes our souls from sin through tears of loving sadness which He had poured into us, purifies our souls from sin through the flames of divine love which He has enkindled in us.

For penance to be salutary, to have any proportion toward raising us from the death and darkness of sin to the supernatural life and light of grace, one of the first requirements is that it be supernatural, elicited by a supernatural principle, by a mind enlightened and a will impelled by God's immediate supernatural influx. We can not by our natural powers raise our dead bodies from physical death to natural life. Much less can we by our natural powers raise our souls from spiritual and moral death to supernatural life, by which we are sharers of the divine nature and heirs of heaven and of God Himself. By nothing does God so manifest His omnipotence as by justifying and sanctifying a sinful soul.

Does the requirement that penance be thus aided by grace and supernatural, cause it to be hard and rare? By no means.

“God, who gives to *all abundantly* does not refuse grace to him who does what is in himself, in his power.” As we have seen, this is the maxim of the Angel of the Schools, and in this he is followed by all the Catholic schools. Rather, he and all the schools in this only follow the Scriptures, Fathers and Councils, as we have seen fully in the chapter on the abundance of God’s graces. In aiding us, God is not like a giant alongside of a pygmy rolling a huge stone up a hill, but rather like a giant mysteriously and secretly infusing His mighty courage and strength into the pygmy’s heart and arm. David and Samson might have had their supernatural strength without being conscious of their power until they tried to wield it. Much more might they have been unconscious of its divine supernatural source. Holy thoughts and desires may be from God’s enlightenment and inspiration without our being aware that those spiritual phenomena exist or have such a cause. How many thoughts or impulses are started in us by heat, light, electricity, songs of birds, the beauty and fragrance of flowers, the sight of clouds, the sky, or stars, by the quality of our food or drink, by the presence of various companions, etc. How often we are only semi-conscious of these thoughts or impulses, and how much oftener we are ignorant of what suggested them. Our care should be to have and cherish holy movements of mind and will. We can securely leave to God the care of supernaturalizing them. If we had natural love for God, St. Francis de Sales tells us, God would see to it that it would become supernatural.

Is it required that the motive of penance, of our sorrow and detestation for our sins, and of our purpose not to sin anew, refer to God? Yes, by all means.

There are some actions which are good only because they are commanded, and some others bad only because they are prohibited. Thus, to receive the sacraments would not be good unless they had been freely and positively instituted and commanded by God. To eat the forbidden fruit was made a bad act only by the divine prohibition. But, besides, there are other actions which are in themselves bad and improper for our reasonable nature viewed in its completeness with its essential relations to God, our neighbor, or our own body or soul, and God Himself was not free not to forbid them

as essential disorders, and He is rightly said to forbid these *because* they are bad. And they are not bad *merely* because He forbids them. However, they are not sins and are unthinkable as sins without the element of His authority forbidding them. They are against the natural law, but all law, and natural law, too, is unthinkable as a rule of action obligating or binding our conscience without a lawgiver commanding some actions to be done and others not to be done. Thus we see that all the doctrinaires who are openly or stealthily instilling into the minds of the young their so-called morality or immorality without God, by this fact would make all sorrow for sin, or all forgiveness for sin by God, out of the question. Many of them even openly teach that sorrow for sin is useless and can do no good. Intemperance in eating or drinking, apart from being forbidden by God as a disorder, is contrary to right reason and our rational nature, but is not a sin except as also forbidden by God. There can thus be no true penance, whether of attrition or contrition, without our sorrow and detestation for intemperance and the purpose of not sinning anew, being determined by the motive of obedience to God, or by the motive of religion, or of gratitude, or of special penance, or of fear of God's punishments, or of hope for His rewards, or of love for Him because He is good, or by some other universal virtue. Each one of those virtues explicitly refers to God. It is not difficult for us to thus refer our penance to God, and thus this requirement makes no special difficulty in practice.

Is it required that the motive be supernatural, be regarded as known by supernatural revelation and not merely by natural reason? We may leave this speculative question to the discussion of the theologians who are divided upon it. By natural reason we could know that we should obey God, be grateful for His benefits, honor Him by religion, fear His punishments, hope for His rewards, repair injury to Him by penance, love Him for His goodness. As a fact God has taught us by revelation that we should. And when we have any one of these motives we easily regard it as known to us by revelation. It is not required by any theologian that we make an *explicit* act of faith each time that we make an

act of attrition or contrition with or without reference to the sacrament of Baptism or Penance. Thus the requirement of a supernatural motive for salutary penance would not make any difficulty in practice. We beg the reader to recall the case of the child who has just reached the use of reason and deliberating rightly resolves to do what is right, what is useful for his true happiness, and yet has never heard of Christ or even of God. Let him recall what St. Thomas says of this case and how the saint is approvingly cited by the Jesuit theologian Pesch, and is endorsed by the greatest Dominican and Jesuit commentators on the words of their common master. According to them all, God would supply the previous defect of supernatural faith. Thus this requirement is no difficulty in practice. Of course, without faith it is impossible to be pleasing to God so as to be justified, and he who approaches God must not merely know by reason but believe by faith that God exists and is a rewarder to all that seek Him, and we can not elicit an act of charity or of perfect contrition without faith and hope. What a pity it is that not all of our children are trained to always tune their souls up for the act of perfect contrition by previously striking the notes of faith, hope and love. Such explicit preludes are most useful but not necessary. It is not necessary to insert after the word "because" the words "I believe," either in the act of hope, or of love, or of contrition. However, the words "I believe" are always there implied.

Another requirement for attrition or contrition is that they be interior, that they be in the mind and will, and not merely in word or on the tongue while the heart is far away. "Tear your hearts and not your garments," says the Prophet Joel. (ii. 13.) Aversion from God is in the mind and will, and there is no true conversion to God save in the same mind and will.

The Council of Trent defines generic penance as "sorrow and detestation of soul for sins committed, with the purpose of not sinning anew." It must be in the soul or heart, it must contain sorrow or sadness, detestation or hate, and purpose or resolution. Every clause of the definition thus requires that penance be interior. From childhood we have all been taught that no matter how often we have confessed

our sins and received absolution from them, even though the Pope himself were our confessor, the absolutions would all be null unless our acts of contrition were sincere and interior. Scoffers often say that we believe that all we have to do to be forgiven for our sins is to confess them to the priest and to have him pronounce the formula of absolution, and to perform some trivial penance. Sometimes they say that we thus impose a tyrannical butchery of the soul. At other moments the same scoffers say that our procedure makes forgiveness too easy, encourages the continuance of sin. Many of these same individuals, when asked, answer that the only penance is newness of life. By this they seem to mean that the only element essential to penance is the firm purpose not to sin anew. And thus they seem to us to imply that the murderer who resolves not to commit murder again is sufficiently converted though he does not hate himself for his bloody deed, and though he is even glad he did it. For penance the Catholic Church requires not only purpose but also detestation and sadness, and also at least the implicit purpose of confessing and performing the penance given. These scoffers will not reflect how their Catholic friends, known to be virtuous and honorable, earnestly desire that their wives, sons and daughters practise frequent confession, and how such friends know everything about the nature and effects of this practice, and know that confession as it is practised conduces strongly to make our sorrow, hate and purpose deeper and even to make them interior when they had not before been so. This quality, therefore, presents no special difficulty against contrition being perfect.

Attrition or contrition for mortal sins must also be universal. Suppose the following extreme case. A criminal has frequently gravely violated each one of the ten commandments, each one of the theological and moral or cardinal virtues, committed each one of the seven deadly sins. His crimes are a thousand in number. He has attrition or contrition for each and all of them except one—for example, except one murder, or one adultery, or one theft, or one calumny. This one unrepented crime makes him God's enemy, prevents him from becoming God's friend, forfeits all claim to heaven, condemns him to hell, obstructs the pouring in of God's justify-

ing sanctifying grace, by which alone the guilt of mortal sin and condemnation to eternal punishment are blotted out. Even if he had kept the whole law, and grievously offended only in one point, he is guilty of the whole, an enemy of the Author of the whole, whom he is bound to love as a friend. By offending in one point he broke a link in the golden chain which joins the divine and human will in the love of friendship. Let us compare his soul to a ship. Every plank in it is sound and strong and in its place save one. He took out that one plank and the flood of divine wrath entered it and sunk it. "*Bonum ex integra causa, malum e quocumque defectu.*" A man to be good must keep the commandments of God in their entirety. He becomes a bad man from one grave defect, from violating one grave commandment, and thus either immediately or mediately violating the divine friendship or love. As long as his will clings to one grave sin, it is by the fact averted, turned away from God. In him there can be no contrition or attrition, no generic penance, no state of grace, no forgiveness.

The case of a sinner heartily hating his 999 sins, and heartily sorry for them, and firmly resolved to avoid them, and yet impenitent for one sin, was called by us an extreme case. It is impossible, at least morally or practically. It supposes interior obedience, religion, gratitude, penance, fear, hope or love, so great as to determine him to interior hate, sadness, resolve, with regard to 999 sins or offenses against God's law. A soul which has that much of any one of these virtues will, in our judgment, always also have not only 999 but 1000 degrees. If it has not that one remaining degree, in our judgment it did not have the 999. Thus the case becomes not only morally impossible but absurd, the second supposition contradicts the first. Anyhow, if the first supposition was true in fact, God by His powerful graces would see to it that that soul which had taken 999 difficult steps toward Him would also take the thousandth and last step, and by His aid expel from its spiritual system, strengthened by throwing out of itself those 999 grains of poison, this one remaining grain. In our judgment this conclusion follows naturally from what was seen in the chapter on the precious quality and abundant quantity of God's graces, and in the chapter on love for

God above all things being natural for one who has obedience, religion, gratitude, penance, fear, hope, or love, as there explained. Although this conclusion may not be absolutely necessary, yet it is natural. It goes a step further than the conclusions drawn previously. At all events, these considerations manifest that the ordinary soul may easily have attrition or contrition which is universal, and that the requirement of universality does not make them specially hard or rare in practice. This universality is specially easy for souls trained to say devoutly the Confiteor and the Catholic Acts of Faith, Hope, Love, and Contrition.

As all Catholic writers observe, the universality of the resolution or purpose of amendment must be more extensive than that of sorrow and detestation. We must have sorrow and detestation for all the mortal sins which we have *committed*, but the purpose to avoid *absolutely all* mortal sins. Does the requirement of such a purpose constitute any special difficulty for the ordinary soul? No. Once a novice had prepared for confession a convict who had been a New York pickpocket, but was now penitent and even fervent. Thinking to strengthen the purpose and fervor of the former thief, the novice asked: "If you were out of the penitentiary and back on the Bowery and at three o'clock in the morning you saw a man lying in a doorway stupid and helpless from drink and there were no one near but you and him, and you noticed a thousand-dollar bill sticking out of his pocket, you would not take it, would you?" "I might never get another chance like that in all my life," said the previously fervent penitent, whose dormant evil habits and inclinations were thus imprudently aroused and excited. St. Thomas says that any one who thus tempts himself or another is a *fool*.

"He who is contrite is bound to be ready to suffer anything *in general* rather than to sin. But he is not bound to come down to this or that suffering *in particular*, and whoever stirs up himself or another about these particular sufferings acts *like a fool*. For it is manifest that as pleasant things move us more when considered in particular than when viewed in general, so also terrible things terrify more when considered in particular, and there are some who do not fall under a lesser temptation and might fall under a greater. Thus some one hearing of adultery may not be incited to lust. But if by his considerations he descends to its single special allurements.

he is more strongly moved. And likewise, some one might not recoil from suffering death for Christ, but if he descended to consider particular sufferings, he might be drawn back from his resolve. And, therefore, to descend in such things to particulars, is leading a being who is human into temptation and holding out to him the occasion of sinning."

This homely teaching of the Angel of the Schools is the common teaching of theologians of all schools, and is common sense and self-evident truth, which is seen and known to be such by all as soon as it is put before them in simple words of explanation such as those of the Angelic Doctor. It meets squarely one of the strongest of all the difficulties against our main proposition that love for God above all things and hatred for sin above all evils from the motive of such love may be easy and common. Take the words "above all things" and "above all evils." What do they mean and what do they not mean? Accept the interpretation of the Angel of the Schools, who in this is followed by all the schools, and where is the difficulty of loving God above all things or detesting sin above all evils save in a fancy conjured up by folly? For it is nothing but a fancy of folly that to love God above all things, or to detest sin above all evils, it is necessary with the imagination to first place before the mind vivid pictures of all the commandments, of all the virtues, of all their difficulties, and of all particular evils or sufferings, and then say in our heart that we are ready to suffer each and all of these particular evils all together at once in preference to committing mortal sin. We have the word of St. Thomas and of all theologians that to do this is folly. To teach or believe that it is necessary to do this, is even greater folly. The Angel of the Schools here looks at this point only from the side of common sense and knowledge of human nature, and perhaps this summary brevity is the best way to deal with such folly in order to impress all that it is but folly. And maybe in the face of such a difficulty we felt like the soldier who would not fire his cannon to kill the tiny sparrow that was stealing the seeds from his garden patch near the fort.

But St. Thomas and all other theologians have much more to say about a soul facing the difficulties in keeping all the commandments and in loving God above all things and detesting sin above all evils, as helped to do all this by God's super-



natural actual graces. These graces are helps given here and now to do acts commanded or counseled to this individual soul by God here and now, and are given by God to specially strengthen this soul not at all times but only here and now or in the moment of need. We have no reason to believe that Almighty God put extraordinary strength into the arms of Samson, Judith, or David at all the moments of their life, but only when they were face to face with the Philistines, or Holofernes, or Goliath. And if His providence puts our soul into a situation where it has to meet extraordinary temptations which may be compared to the Philistines, Holofernes, or Goliath, He then gives us helps to do great deeds and overcome our mighty enemies. However, we can not expect these helps to be given by Almighty God when we have not been placed in these situations by His providence, but have created them or plunged into them by our own wanton folly, when we have brought Philistines, or Holofernes, or Goliath from a distance into our own country. He has commanded His angels to watch over our souls and keep us in all our ways and bear us up in their hands lest we dash our foot against a stone or stumbling block left in the special road marked out by His providence for us to walk in. But He has commanded no such special care of angels for souls that insist on going out of the right road prescribed for them by providence, or that while keeping to the right road create stumbling blocks for themselves or even cast themselves down from precipices. And individuals who thus make pictures of particular pleasures or terrors that they have not yet been called on to meet in order to love God or avoid sin, do leave the road marked out for them by providence, and while thus idly straying or loitering do raise stumbling blocks for themselves or plunge down precipices or walk on their slippery edge. Therefore, it is plain that for attrition or contrition, or love for God to be supreme, it is not necessary for us first to make pictures of all the particular commandments obliging under mortal sin, and of all the particular difficulties that we may have to overcome in order to persevere in keeping all those commandments, and then afterward say in our hearts that we are ready to meet each one of these difficulties in particular and overcome it.

This particularization of difficulties is not necessary for

supremeness in sorrow or hate for sin, or in motives of fear, or hope, or love, and neither is it necessary for firmness of purpose of not sinning again in the future. Indeed, for the purpose to be firm, the penitent must have a sincere will not to fall back into sin, else he would not have a will converted to God sincerely and entirely. This purpose must be practical, and the penitent must resolve not only not to will sin again, but also to take the necessary practical means to avoid mortal sin and its occasions which are proximate or which are such that if he has gone into them he has commonly or usually fallen in the past. The chief means of avoiding sin is in the practice of prayers, and they must be said not merely with the lips while the heart is far away or with only a faint wish to receive what we ask. But we must in prayer ask first the kingdom of God and His justice, the salvation of our souls, the love of everything that is right, and the hate of everything that is wrong for ourselves, and ask frequently, earnestly, humbly and confidently, and thus we will easily acquire a disgust for sins and obtain the help of God to avoid them.

However, it is enough that the penitent be now disposed to use these and other necessary means in the future. Actual future amendment is not of the essence of the present disposition, and a fall to-day is not proof that the soul was not standing yesterday. For our will is a reed which can be easily shaken and bowed by the winds of temptation, which are nearly always blowing from one side or another. However, a fall immediately after the resolution was pronounced and without any resistance whatsoever, or the use of any of the necessary means of perseverance, and especially without any remorse after the fall, may be a ground of a prudent suspicion that the purpose was not serious in the first instance, for men who have a serious purpose of amendment do not usually fall *in this way*.

As has been said, the purpose of amendment must be more universal than attrition or contrition in which we must have special hate only for all the sins committed by ourselves in the past, whereas the purpose must be to avoid all sin which can be committed in the future, or absolutely all mortal sins, for there is no full and true conversion to God without an aversion from every future mortal sin whatsoever. If there is true and

deep sadness and hate for past sins from some universal motive, there is also an implicit and virtual purpose to avoid all sin in the future. But is it necessary that the purpose always be also explicit? No, we reply with the large majority of theologians. The following words show that such implicit purpose is enough. They are taken from a form of instruction for children prepared by a Council at Rome under Pope Benedict XIII in the year 1725:

“Penitent.—Does he receive pardon who confesses without sorrow for his sins and without a purpose not to sin anew?”

“Confessor.—If he has not at least imperfect contrition, namely, attrition, with the firm purpose, *at least implicit*, never to sin again, if he confesses his confession is not valid and he does not receive pardon for his sins.”

These instructions are prescribed and used for the children at Rome up to our own day, and from them it is clear that an *implicit* purpose is enough for a valid confession and absolution with imperfect contrition. And we should necessarily infer that an implicit purpose is likewise enough for the remission of sin with perfect contrition. The reason for this sufficiency is the same in both cases. True, the Council of Trent besides sorrow and detestation requires the purpose, but does not say that this purpose must be explicit.

Could there not be sorrow and detestation for sins in the past without a purpose to avoid all sins in the future? Yes, if the motive of the sorrow and detestation was only special and not universal, but if the motive was universal, no. Suppose a man guilty of murder, adultery, and perjury. He has, we suppose, a sorrow and detestation for each one of these enormities as specially hideous and degrading in itself, but has no sorrow or detestation for them for any motive which is universal and applies to all sins past or future, such as the considerations that they lose heaven, deserve hell, or displease God, who is good and deserving of all love, etc. Such sorrow and detestation are conceivable without an implicit purpose to avoid all mortal sins in the future. But if this same criminal is sorry for these crimes and hates them not only because they are specially detestable and degrading, but also because they lost heaven, deserved hell, or displeased God, who is good and deserving of all love, then his sorrow and detestation neces-

sarily, virtually, or implicitly include the purpose to avoid all mortal sins. If any one cares to see authorities for this teaching, he may read the words of the seventy-three grave authors cited by Ballerini-Palmieri, vol. 5, p. 75 sq., who tell us that this is the practically unanimous teaching of Catholic theologians. However, habitual sinners should be specially directed to make the explicit purpose of amendment. On the other hand, souls that live holily and piously often omit the formal, explicit, or reflex will not to sin again, in their preparation for confession. But they are habitually turned away from sin in their will, and they are not to be troubled by the confessor as if they now must change their will. Their whole life is a direct, implicit, virtual purpose of amendment, and their sorrow and hatred for sin manifestly contains not only a firm but a stable and very firm purpose of amendment. And a confessor who would exact an explicit purpose of amendment from them might easily make them scrupulous and himself ridiculous. Every confessor of experience has met souls who never commit mortal sin, and yet perhaps refuse to pronounce the ordinary formula of the act of contrition with the explicit purpose of amendment, and with over scrupulosity about veracity refuse to say that they are resolved to avoid all mortal sin in the future, and will say only that they hope not to be grievously tempted, or if tempted that Almighty God will hinder them from yielding. However, the confessor sees that they have made this resolution and expressed it by their deeds, which are better signs of the firm resolution than any formula of words, and have expressed it also by those words, implicitly if not explicitly; and thence refusal to say the words of the formula should never keep him from giving absolution and counseling daily communion.

An objection against this common or unanimous teaching of theologians is the following: To love God above all things we must be resolved to keep all the commandments. The answer is we must be resolved, implicitly and directly I grant, explicitly and reflexly I deny. In explanation of this distinction we might recall the teaching of Cardinal Gotti that to make an act of love it is not necessary to express it even in such a vague formula as the following: "My God, I love Thee above all things"; that it is not necessary to express it in any

words at all, as mothers love their children and often do not say that they love them; and that it is not necessary that we ourselves know or notice that we have made an act of love. The mother loves her child and spends herself for it, and thus makes a direct act of love. She thinks of herself and her love for the child and reflects on it, and we call this a reflex act of love. Again, she loves this child known to need her watchful care, and when the need arises she acts promptly and gladly on account of her maternal affection, and her love thus includes an implicit resolution to do all that may be needful or useful or even pleasing to this child as far as prudence allows. For her love to be true is it necessary that she say with her lips in a formula that she is resolved to give this child her days and nights, her strength and health and life. If you ask her to say this she will probably refuse, because you ought to suppose such a resolution in any mother, and you insult her by asking her to say such words. Even ordinarily pious people are, according to Cardinal Gotti and others, making acts of love for God frequently and almost continuously in prayer, the practice of the virtues and resistance to temptation. To insist on their making an explicit formal resolution to keep all the commandments is, to the mind of some, to ask them to count and calculate how much they are willing to give to God. Whereas it is their way to give much to God without taking time to look back to count and calculate, and they have a holy Christian instinct not to let their left hand know how much their right hand has given, and they dread lest self-consciousness may become self-complacency, sweet self-praise, flattery, and a thief of humility and merit. Perhaps they were taught by the prudent nurse that children who keep looking at themselves in the glass in the end see a devil in it, and they, therefore, avoid looking at themselves too often in the mirror of self-consciousness.

What about the frequent case of those who have the purpose of not sinning again, but greatly fear or even know for certain that they will sin again? Can these penitents be regarded as having a purpose of amendment which is firm? Why not? For the sincere will not to sin is not excluded by fears arising from knowledge of the fickleness of the human will and of our own frailty in the past. A penitent asked by

the confessor about his true purpose of amendment replies: "I am weak and fear a relapse, but I don't wish it *now*, and I do not *now* choose to fall." Gerson, the illustrious chancellor of the University of Paris, says such a penitent does not thus show that he has not a firm purpose. Another grave author (LaCroix) says:

"I have shown that for a serious purpose it is not required, even with regard to mortal sins, that we believe a relapse will not follow. But it is enough that there now be a serious will with which as long as it exists there can not co-exist the will of relapsing, although perhaps it may be foreseen that this purpose will be changed by weakness in the future. As St. Peter was not judged by Our Lord to be devoid of sufficient dispositions for communion because it was known that he would fall, thus neither is the habitual sinner to be regarded as indisposed for absolution although it be known with moral certainty that he will relapse."

This doctrine here exposed by the Jesuit LaCroix is identical with the following teaching of the Franciscan Sporer:

"There is required only the firm purpose of the will not to sin, and not necessarily also a belief or certain conviction on the part of the understanding, so that the penitent should certainly believe or persuade himself in his mind that he will not sin any more or that he will not again commit this or that sin. This is the common teaching of the Doctors. For a person can be truly sorry for sin and detest it, and truly and absolutely purpose not to sin again, although he greatly fears or even thinks, nay believes for certain, on account of past experience of the inconstancy of the will and of his own frailty, that he himself will relapse again and will not avoid all mortal sins or even this special kind of sin."

LaCroix adds the following words:

"However, if the habitual sinner despairs of his own amendment, it will be *difficult* for him to have a true purpose; hence, before he is absolved he ought to be disposed by the confessor so as to hope, not through his own powers but through God's grace, by co-operating with which he will have the power, as has been shown by countless similar examples."

Sporer also subjoins these like explanations:

"However, if the penitent considering his own weakness and his inveterate bad habit, judge it to be *altogether impossible* for himself in the future to abstain from some one or more kinds of mortal sins, he is to be efficaciously induced by the confessor to hope, and he ought altogether to persuade himself that considering the efficacy of

divine grace there is no impossibility, and that if he will confide in divine grace and not in himself without it, he can conceive a firm purpose of not sinning again, and can say with the Apostle, 'I can do all things in Him who strengthens me, Christ.' But if the penitent is unable, or rather *unwilling*, whereas he is really able, to do this, he can not be absolved as being by his own fault devoid of true contrition and in a state of despair of God's grace, and thus not disposed for justification and the sacrament." The foregoing means merely that those can not be absolved who refuse to make the act of hope.

The practical difficulty occurs chiefly when (as not rarely happens) a penitent of good will otherwise, but terrified by the difficulty of the matter, says that he can not promise this lest he may appear to have afterward broken his word, or that he can not trust himself, etc. This happens especially to those who have a habit of taking in vain the name of God or the saints, of cursing, of getting angry on account of occasions which can not be avoided, etc. Such penitents are not only to be encouraged by the hope of divine help, but are also to be taught that all that is exacted is this one thing; namely, that here and now they have the will not to relapse. But the prudence of the confessor must be exercised in such a way that he seems to exact only the things which the penitent easily recognizes to be in his power. And the confessor will attain this end by placing before the penitent the means to be used in the moments of tranquillity and peace or in the other moments of disturbance by actual temptation. And above all the confessor must insistingly impress on the penitent's mind that he is required only to avoid faults which are deliberate. This consideration is the most encouraging of all to those who have the bad habit of cursing, blaspheming, getting angry, etc.

The doctrine in the preceding paragraphs may be confirmed by the following homely examples. A young priest had baptized a sick butcher-boy dwelling on the border of a certain town. After the baptism the boy suddenly and almost miraculously showed full faith in the truths which the Catholic Church believes and teaches, and became singularly devout in spite of his past life of gross ignorance and low habits, which had made him much like the animals with which he had long associated. The sickness turned out to be a sporadic but most malignant case of yellow fever with copious black

vomit and other horrible symptoms of the worst type of that terrible disease, which instantaneously seizes even the young and vigorous and attacks almost every one of the vital organs. Under the care of experienced physicians and the watchful nursing of his mother, brothers, and sisters, and especially of a very poor and saintly old lady who had first called in the priest and had continued to work and pray by his bedside, he was kept alive for several days and was ever responsive to the pious suggestions of the young priest and the angelic old lady, for whom he constantly called when absent a moment. One of his sisters had disgraced the family and become an outcast, but the sick brother had caused her to come to his bedside and induced the family to forgive her and take her back into their home. One night the priest was suddenly summoned out of bed to assist him in his agony. What was the horror of him who had never before seen any one die, to hear his previously fervent neophyte now almost with his dying breath uttering loud and repeated blasphemies. But he affectionately grasped the hand of the dying man and forced recognition and obtained several acts of contrition and resignation and repeated the absolution, and none too soon, for the sick man now ceased to breathe. After preaching the funeral sermon and accompanying the poor boy's remains to the cemetery, the priest himself fell sick, not only from loss of sleep and exposure to the noxious night air of autumn during his assiduous attentions to his first convert, but especially from the shock to his nerves from this his first death-scene, in which almost the last breath had been blasphemy. The physician was called in and reported that the patient had a high fever which was serious, but would not be dangerous if his mind were not so troubled. The venerable pastor when alone with the young assistant urged him to tell his trouble, and after hearing the cause of the shock, burst into a hearty laugh and said:

"So, with your bookish, narrow mind, you thought that that young man committed mortal sins by his profanities. Why, didn't you see his true goodness of soul as long as he was well enough to have control over his nerves? All the good things which that boy said and did while he was fully conscious and master of himself were perfectly voluntary and wholly of his



own doing, but his bad words afterward were the involuntary effect of overpowering nervous derangement. It is certain that he did not fully mean and wish those words. In one of his weak mental conditions and past inveterate habits of swearing, such words were no sign of anger or irreverence but only of a feeling of anguish. It is ridiculous to suppose that they could be deliberate mortal sins in him, and it is doubtful if their sinfulness was even venial."

The following example is not tinged with tragedy like the preceding, and even has a touch of comedy.

A priest while strolling along the docks heard some loud swearing from a sailor who was an old acquaintance, and he administered a sharp rebuke to Jack. The sailor humbly apologized to his Reverence, whose presence he had not noticed, and the apology being accepted the two entered into a familiar conversation, which gradually became very cordial. After a while Jack remarked to the Father: "Sometimes I do be thinking, Your Reverence, that us sailors don't commit sins when we swears." "How is that, Jack?" "It's just this way, saving Your Reverence. Our curse-words is like the words Your Reverence says in your prayers." "What do you mean by that, Sir?" "That's just it," says Jack. "I says bad words in my curses and you says good words in your prayers, but neither one of us be thinking of what he is saying or wishing bad or good luck to Almighty God or any one else, and so neither you nor I means the words that he says with his lips." "Well, Jack," replies the Father, "I'm afraid there is too much truth in your view. I see your weakness and you see mine. But if you paid attention to what you say when you make the sign of the cross, you would soon feel disgusted with foul words in everybody's mouth and especially your own. All know you are a Catholic, and your cursing does not help your non-Catholic comrades to respect or love the Church, your mother, or to wish to embrace the true Faith. Look at your Captain N. He has been running on this river for thirty years. His wife begged him never to curse, and he took a pledge to her against profanity, and since his wedding-day none of his pilots or mates, or mudclerks, or cabin boys, or deckhands, or passengers, have ever heard him swear, and as they know that swearing hurts his feelings, they never

let him hear anything against Our Lord from their lips. And as he has made up his mind never to swear, that's why he never lost his head in any delay or fog or storm or even when his boat got on fire. Jack, what Captain N. does, you can do, too, with the help of Our Lord and His Blessed Mother. I know I should try harder to say with attention and devotion all the holy words I utter in my beads and breviary and Mass, for this is the means for me to be a good priest. But you also should try harder to say with attention and devotion the short words of your sign of the cross and Pater and Ave, and this is the means for you to love to be a good sailor and a Christian gentleman. I do hope you sailors do not mean what you say when you curse, but I also hope that in the future you will be man enough to think a little and mean what you say during your short prayers, and then with the help of God you'll not wish to swear."

How many cases similar to these the confessor meets almost every week and perhaps every day, especially around Easter-time or during a mission. Downhearted souls have put off coming to confession and communion perhaps for years. One says, "I am a nervous wreck of a woman and I have to work all day among other women even more nervous and quarrelsome." Others say, "We are domestics or employees and our masters or mistresses are constantly goading us to anger by cruel exactions or brutal manners." Another says, "I am the mother of many children who are often without clothes or shoes or bread, and my husband rarely comes home on Saturday after he has received his pay, which he then entirely squanders on gambling, drinking and debauchery, and on the Tuesday afterward, when he does come home, he curses and beats me and the children and keeps this up off and on until the following Saturday." Each of these says, "I have stayed away from the sacraments all this long time because I thought it was no use for me to come. I have said my prayers the best I could, morning and night, and I have all along despised myself for my sins of anger and quarreling and cursing. But I knew I would commit these sins again, and I could not promise that I would not keep falling into them, and I knew also the priest would not and could not give me absolution for them as long as I had not the purpose of amendment."

And what does the learned and prudent and kind priest answer? He says, "O my dear child, what a goose you were not to come here long ago to ask *me* whether it was right for you to come to confession and communion. I know my business better than self-constituted directors of your soul who have not studied theology or heard confessions or seen your heart, and will not try to be good themselves, and care little for your soul and its happiness, and perhaps would even like to keep you from going to the sacraments lest your piety might be a standing reproach to their own neglect or recklessness or impiety. Have you never heard of St. Philip Neri, so learned and wise and innocent, who not only repeatedly absolved every day the young man who committed mortal sin every day, but also gave him no other penance but to come back to confession immediately after the next fall into mortal sin. This young man knew that he was going to commit the same mortal sin again, and could not promise that he would not, and yet St. Philip, who knew those things, too, absolved him, and surely this saint would not have absolved one known not to have the purpose of amendment, and he had the joy of seeing that sinner finally cured by the sacraments.

"Sometimes the priest does exact promises not to do certain things again, but in cases like yours, persons can not know that they will not sin again without being prophets, and they ought not to promise that they will not fall. The occasions of your sins are things which you can not help, circumstances outside of yourself over which you have no control and which you can not avoid. St. Peter promised not to deny Our Lord, but that promise was no proof that he would not fall three times before the cock crew, but rather a proof of too much reliance on his own firmness, and it was not indeed without pride and presumption. He had a true resolution not to deny Our Lord, and his spirit was willing, but his flesh was weak, and he had not then received the extraordinary lights and inspirations of the Holy Ghost by which he was afterward even confirmed in grace and strengthened so as never to fall again into any mortal sin. But when he made that promise he looked for perseverance to his own strength solely, and he afterward gave way to sadness and drowsiness in the darkness of the Garden of Olives instead of watching and praying one hour

with Our Lord, and he thus neglected the means to make his spirit more deeply willing and more ready to cope with his human infirmity and his fears of Judas and the priests and the soldiers and even of the servant maid. Did St. Peter's fall show that he had not been standing? Does the fall of the oak under the blast of the hurricane show that previously it was not erect and rooted in the soil? Only a miracle of God's power can keep the oak erect through the violence of some storms, and only God's extraordinary graces can keep a soul from falling into sin under the stress of temptations like yours. If St. Peter had not been sincere and decided to stand by Our Lord at all costs, he would not have resisted in the beginning when he drew his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus. And if you were not sincere in your serious wish to avoid sin, you would not have said your prayers so faithfully, and especially you would not have come here now and made this humble confession.

"St. Peter looked too much at his own natural bravery and strength, and you look too much at your own lack of courage and strength in the past. He neglected watching and praying, and you neglect the sacraments or the means offered by God to obtain a courage and strength which are above the powers of human nature. Furthermore, you must remember that if scolding back at a persecuting companion, master, or husband stops or lessens their persecutions or even partially corrects them of their faults of injustice or inhumanity, your scolding may be a case of justifiable self-defense and may be as reasonable as the mother's scolding of her child to correct it of its fault. But above all you must remember that only fully deliberate acts can be mortal sins, and that your words and deeds of anger said or done under the impression of stinging, heart-cutting treatment are the outcome of unavoidable hot blood which momentarily makes you unable to know or care what you say or do, and may even make you momentarily insane. If you were a great saint and had heroic virtue, you would still possess your soul in peace and remain as meek as the Divine Lamb of God tortured and insulted on the cross, and if you approach the sacraments frequently and devoutly, you may soon be surprised to see yourself thus humble, patient, meek, and even charitable and loving to those

who persecute you. But the chief practical point now is for you to see that for you to have a true purpose not to sin again by anger, it is enough for you to say to me, to yourself, and to God that you seriously wish with God's help to avoid words and acts of deliberate unjustifiable anger in the future.

"You may remember the case of your little son led by you to the church to receive holy communion. He had been to confession with the other children in the early afternoon on Saturday, but afterward got into a quarrel with his brother and then alternately fought and stole his way back into the confessional ahead of the disgusted crowds of old men and women who had been long waiting their turn in the line to make their confessions. He then came home and said his short night prayers at your knee with a sweetness that you rewarded with your tenderest mother's kiss and embrace when he arose and told you good-night. And after he was in bed you went into his room to gaze on his face so bright in his placid slumbers that you could easily believe that God and the angels were whispering to his candid soul. The following morning he was not lazy to rise as on other days, but sprang out of bed at the first sound of your call, and he did not then rebel as on other occasions against your vigorous applications of soap and water to his hands, face, ears, and the roots of his hair, from which, with your spectacles on your nose, you wished to extract the last of the many specks of dust which he had gathered in his running and tumbling on the streets during his Saturday holiday sports. And now in his best Sunday suit, crowned by a broad, snow-white collar and new and bright streaming necktie, with no breakfast in his stomach or mischief in his blood, he is walking by your side, hanging on to your skirts with his hand, and not fearing as usually lest there may be some person or thing he does not see, but with his eyes meekly half closed and cast down. You see a number of sweet, gentle little angels of girls flocking to Mass and communion, but you glance from their faces to that of your little boy, and you can not help thinking that his look is the more serious and pious and radiant and beautiful and gentle and sweet as he is walking along with you and thinking of receiving Our Lord into his heart.

"But there is another small boy named Jimmie who is not

going to communion this day, and who, seeing your little Johnnie looking so unusually serious and quiet and nice, can not resist the temptation to give him a sudden kick from behind, and your pious little Johnnie forthwith forgets his confessions and his good resolutions and his near communion, and with a hearty blow of his fist administers a bloody nose to his unjust aggressor. But you leaving Jimmie to his just fate, take Johnnie into the parlor to a kind confessor, and Johnnie between broken sobs and big hot tears, which soil his shining morning face, tells how he lost his absolution by punching Jimmie's nose. And the good Father takes your little son into his arms and lap and laughs till Johnnie stops crying and laughs himself. And he tells you and Johnnie both to run along quick to Mass and communion after he has humored you and Johnnie by repeating the absolution which had not been lost, and after requiring the confession of some sin of his past life, for, says the Father, 'That was not a mortal sin for Johnnie and it did not make him lose his absolution, and it would not be enough to accuse as sufficient matter for absolution, for, as he had no time to think and did not think even for a second before he hit Jimmie, it was not a venial sin.'

"Cannot Johnnie go to confession and receive absolution and communion and have a resolution of amendment from such sins, though he knows he will commit them again, and that he can not promise that he will never hit back, when he is assaulted. These circumstances do not show that he now has no resolution to avoid deliberate sin in the future. And your case is much like that of Johnnie. He has a firm resolution of amendment before his confession, and the bad things which he says or does afterward under some sudden strong impulse are not deliberate and may not be even venial faults."

To bring out more clearly the true principles of theologians on this practical matter and impress them more vividly on the understanding and memory of all our readers, we will lastly add the examples of the two housewives. This story is not our own, but was told first by Father John Baptist Roothaan (who was the General of the Society of Jesus before Father Peter Beckx), while on a tour among the Jesuit houses in France in the year 1848, when he had been temporarily driven

out of Rome by the Revolutionaries. Many of our readers know that Father Roothaan was a saintly scholar whose writings on prayer and the Exercises of St. Ignatius are standard authorities. His look and manner among strangers, and especially among the dignitaries of the Roman Curia, were in strong contrast with the off-hand, benign ways of Pius IX and Peter Beckx, but this learned and perhaps over-serious ascetic often taught spiritual truth in a laughing way, and he won all hearts during his exile in France by his simplicity of character. He was a native of Holland, and we suspect that the diligent housewife of his story is a picture of his own mother, a typical Dutch woman.

Somewhere in his sketches, Washington Irving describes a little aristocratic Dutch town renowned and distinguished even in Holland for its exquisite neatness. Irving found the streets there cleaner than the floors of parlors in the palaces of some other lands. Early every morning he saw noble dames down on their knees scrubbing the part of the street in front of their homes, and he noticed that the ancient paving-stones had all been worn away by lusty applications of soap and water from generation to generation, as the foot of the bronze statue of St. Peter in the Vatican Basilica is repeatedly worn away by the lips of pious pilgrims who throughout the centuries have come there to kiss it. Irving says that the idea of heaven in the minds of these Dutch women is indeed that of a palace whose "floor is thick inlaid with patens of bright gold," but where they will enjoy not eternal rest from toils, but rather the eternal privilege of scrubbing.

"Well," said Father Roothaan, "once upon a time there were two housewives, one lazy and the other diligent. The lazy housewife was perseveringly strenuous in gadding and gossiping. She scrubbed her floors only at long intervals and never thoroughly. Her dusting was likewise infrequent and perfunctory, and each piece of furniture seemed in the wrong place if it was not upset, and during her long spells of gadding and gossiping the doors and windows were often left wide open. The diligent housewife was just the opposite. She found so much to do at home that she rarely went out and then only for a short stay. Everything in her house was in its right place where she could find it even in the dark, and

she scrubbed and dusted often and well, and during her brief absences each door and window was closed securely against invasion even by specks of dust or beams of light on the colors of her rugs or paintings. Now, it is possible that a tiny mouse might safely hide for a short time in some nook of the house of the diligent housewife, but if the bull broke in she would know it soon and surely. Whereas, not only many mice but even the bull might have passed through the home of the lazy housewife without her knowing it surely or soon."

This fable of the two houses and the mouse and the bull is history—the history of two souls. One of them is like the house of the lazy housewife. The doors and windows of this soul are its senses, especially its eyes, ears, and mouth, through which unclean or vicious brutes of sins enter when they are open and unguarded in order to soil the heart. This soul is rarely washed by penance and never well cleansed by thorough penance. Its thoughts and desires are usually in a tumult of disorder. Disorder is so usual that it is not easily noticed, and the mind is so busy about things outside of itself that it is rarely fixed on itself to see how it stands with God. The mouse is a venial sin and the bull a mortal sin. Their coming into the soul which is recollected so rarely and poorly, does not excite much attention. On the other hand, the soul which is often washed in the sacrament of Penance and takes occasionally a turkish bath by a review or general confession in a retreat; and which watches over itself by frequent examinations of conscience, and is dusted by almost continual acts of love and contrition, and keeps itself in peace by tranquillity of order, and guards the gates of the senses against the approach of all the disorders of the first movements of sensuality and pride, easily detects the presence of any deliberate sin. Even a tiny mouse of deliberate venial sin can not long hide in any nook of such a soul without being noticed. But it is absolutely impossible for a great bull of a deliberate mortal sin to enter into such a soul without its presence being known with certainty and without delay. The learned, kind, and prudent confessor asks such a soul: "Are you absolutely certain that you gave full consent to such or such an evil thought or desire?" You answer, "No." "Then," says the confessor, "I am absolutely certain that you did not. Any



judge in any court would presume that you had acted in this moment in the same way you had acted in the thousands of other preceding moments on similar occasions. You as a witness say that you did not distinctly see yourself consenting. I as the judge say that you with your past would have distinctly seen the consent if it were a fact. You say you did not see this 'bull in the china shop.' I as a judge say, then the bull was not there. My decision is according to cool reason, and you ought to agree with it. In weighing your testimony and deciding from it that you are not guilty, I am following maxims of St. Theresa, which are quoted and endorsed by St. Alphonsus. For they both hold that it is the rarest thing for any soul to fully consent to a grievous temptation and commit a mortal sin and lose the state of grace without seeing this full consent distinctly and certainly. And if this is so rare in general, it is rarer still in the case of a soul which is like the house of the diligent housewife. And such a soul should have special confidence that it has a firm habitual resolution to avoid not only mortal but also venial sins and even imperfections."

Many a confessor has had intimate knowledge of souls of nearly every age and condition who were like that diligent housewife. He has thus seen love to be most common.

## CHAPTER XIV

*SOME FAULTS ARE MERELY VENIAL, DO NOT VIOLATE  
OUR FRIENDSHIP FOR GOD OR DESERVE THAT HE  
BREAK HIS FRIENDSHIP FOR US AND WITHDRAW  
HIS GIFT OF HABITUAL GRACE FROM OUR  
SOULS. WE MAY INTEND TO COMMIT  
VENIAL SINS AND AT THE SAME TIME  
MAKE AN ACT OF LOVE FOR GOD  
ABOVE ALL THINGS FOR HIS  
OWN SAKE*

**S**OME if not all of the Stoics taught that every offense is grievous, deserves an extreme penalty, violates friendship, and makes us unworthy to be loved as a friend by a friend. Horace treats this absurdity in the third satire of his first book of satires and thus calls on Mæcenas and his other friends to come and laugh at it with him.

The following is the substance of some of his sayings so remarkable for humane sentiment, fine wit, and broad-minded common sense :

If all faults are grave and equal and to be visited with extreme penalties, then theft is equal to robbery, that is, to theft plus bodily violence. Treading on one of your neighbor's tender young cabbage-plants is equal to the sin of sacrilege. Your friend has been guilty of some delinquency. It is so small that you are rightly held to be harsh and mean if you do not overlook it. Yet for this you hate and shun him as much as you do your hard-hearted creditor on the gloomy Kalends or first day of the month, when you can not pay him either principal or interest. Your friend was very hungry and without asking your leave eagerly appropriated the part of the chicken that was on your side of the dish and was deemed your rightful portion, or he accidentally upset your delicately carved antique vase. Or you were reading or musing and he abruptly broke in with annoying small talk, as I have often done to you, O Mæcenas. Or he is sensitive and

can not bear ridicule and has no talent for repartee. Or he wears his hair cut like the country clown's and his toga does not fit him and drags on the ground, and his shoes are usually untied and he is an object of ridicule. Yet he is good-hearted and there are none better, and he is your friend, and great talents lie hid under that outward uncouthness. However, you say that he is utterly lacking in common sense and unworthy of friendship. He is virtuous and retiring. You nickname him stupid and dull. Our days are evil and the good are envied and persecuted. He knows the world and is ever on his guard to evade or parry its thrusts aimed at his life. He has a level head and is cautious. For this you call him hypocritical and cunning. A master ordered a slave to take a dish away from the table and suddenly turning around spied the slave behind his back in the act of licking with his tongue the half-eaten fish and the half-warm gravy. For this fault that master nailed that slave to a cross. You are worse than that unreasonable master. Your injustice is against your friend. You desire that he turn his eye away from the great wen on your face, and yet you keep your scornful gaze ever fixed on his tiny pimple.

Horace's cruel pagan master inflicting the extreme penalty on the venial fault of the slave reminds us of a kind master's friendship for a loving negro slave and of their mutual forbearance with each others' faults in view of mutual love of friendship tried and known. Uncle Dick and his ancestors had been house servants in the family of his mistress and her ancestors for several generations. In law, Uncle Dick belonged to them, but he looked on them and theirs as belonging to him. He was the man of all work, caterer, head waiter, and gardener and had charge of the ponies, guns, fishing tackle, etc., of his young masters. When the latter were sent to college he was their guide and companion and consigned them to the care of its president. One of them ran away and Dick captured him and took him back on a pillow on the pommel of the saddle of his master's huge war-horse. Another broke his leg in a game of football and Dick instantly appeared on the scene with a carriage and litter to take the rash athlete home. The good Mammy of the kitchen often filed protests that Dick prolonged his games of cards with the boys when

she needed his help for serving dinner, and Dick was gently rebuked but frequently relapsed into this peccadillo. Perhaps he never heartily detested it or had a firm purpose of not committing it anew. The little mistress suddenly became very ill one day. Dick ran for the physician and then became most active in his routine work, but his heart was so heavy that his head became unbalanced. He had been to the market and brought a large supply of strawberries and left them in the basement and gone up stairs to the sick room to make sure that nothing was left undone for his little idol. Coming down to his work he found his strawberries vanished and a pet heifer munching some of the stems and holding up her head to be stroked. He rudely rejected her caresses and slapped her in the face with the hand she tried to lick and quickly went to the market and bought another basket of berries, and, leaving them in the basement with the door unclosed, again ran upstairs to oversee all the attendants of the sick child. As he came back to the basement there again strawberries had disappeared and there again was the pet confidently begging to be petted. Dick seized a club and dealt the heifer a blow behind the ear and the calf fell on the ground breathless and quivering. Master and mistress and mammy and children and servants soon gathered around as a circle of mourners over the death of their beloved playmate. Dick was the saddest mourner and all were soon sadder for poor dear Dick's sadness than for the calf's untimely end. His sin was regarded as merely venial. The crime in its object or matter was grave, but on account of the hot blood it was subjectively small.

The mistress was a queenly woman of the good old times and had her own ideas and liked to have her own way too. For most things Dick received only general directions and was ordinarily allowed to use his own excellent judgment as to details of dinners, etc. But the mistress was particular about the flower-garden, and would stand over Dick when he was at his work there and issue many orders. However, she would sometimes come back when Dick was at work in the garden and as his overseer scoldingly asked him why he had not clipped the hedges and planted the rows of seeds in the way she had told him but had held on to his own old ways. As a

last resort in the debate, Dick while leaning on his spade would remark, "Dis de way de *ole* missus larn me." And this queenly woman had no alternative but to turn her back and retreat in good order, her right hand more vigorously vibrating her turkey-tail fan, her eyes twinkling, her face beaming and her frame shaking with a chuckle at Dick's adroit maneuver and position which placed her between the horns of the dilemma: Either you must let me have my way or you must condemn the way of your own mother and grandmother.

One day the master had invited a number of distinguished guests to dinner especially to be regaled with a rich cheese which was rare in those days and on which the host had pronounced a glowing eulogy. The dinner was elaborate and was lengthened and enlivened by many an anecdote and discussion and the proud host finally ordered Dick to bring forth the cheese, the end and crown of the feast. But the cheese was not forthcoming. Dick was most actively and mysteriously busy in serving more wine or cordial or coffee. Finally the master got a square look at his face and noted that it seemed as if covered with ashes and that Dick was in terror of some extreme misfortune if not in remorse for some grievous crime and he demanded: "Tell me, sir, what have you done with my cheese?" And poor Dick could only confess the truth: "I done buried him down in de gyarden away under de ground." And guests and mistress burst into a peal of laughter at the catastrophe and the discomfiture of the master, who soon overcame his pain of loss and joined them in their mirth and forgave Dick's venial sin of disobedience caused by ignorance of the value of the cheese as estimated proportionately to the strength of its odor.

When the master rode forth to war and its four years of dangers and hardships, Dick in a wagon followed as cook and valet. And what a resourceful purveyor and preparer of good things! And how devoted to his master and his master's friends, whose name was legion! He was peculiarly sensitive to the smell of powder, the rattle of musketry, the booming of cannon, the cheers of the victorious enemy, or the sight of blood. Yet, when his master was lying in trenches on the firing line, Dick unbidden made his way through the guards to that dangerous spot to carry necessaries and delicacies. And

the poor fellow was carefully detained sometimes all night in the shelter of the breastworks, master and slave slept on a bed of icy cornstalks in the ditch under the one blanket. When there was a lull in the firing, Dick was safely speeded back to the rear with sternest orders not to thus again expose himself. In one of these engagements a heroic young lieutenant, a first cousin of the mistress, had both legs broken by cannon-balls. He was taken to the hospital and the army was to fall back and leave him behind. Dick was handed his emancipation papers and a hundred dollars in gold (all the gold the master had) and ordered to stay with Marse Joe and nurse and bury him and report to some of his kinsfolk of that vicinity. After much demurring Dick finally obeyed not only to the letter but also according to the full spirit of loyal love. A year afterward the enemy was defeated and routed and here came Dick back through the lines a slave again to report about Marse Joe. What a hero he was acknowledged to be in his triumphal progress during his furlough obtained to visit his mistress and little masters and the venerable mother of young Marse Joe! The oldest of the young masters was admitted to the bar and his first act was to draw a deed for Dick's home. Many years after the war, the master died in Dick's strong arms—"I done lost my friend—dat's all." These were the only words that could be elicited by any of the members of the family from that simple-minded black man with a heart of gold.

The moral of the story is this. Dick and his master and mistress all had their faults and were well known to each other, but Dick was their true known friend and they were Dick's true known friends. They could never dream of turning Dick out of the common home for any of his faults and Dick never considered their faults grievous enough to justify his running away. How foolish the philosophy of Stoics or puritans alongside of the good sense of Uncle Dick and his master and mistress! How beautiful to see these last three practising what was preached in the Augustan age to careworn and nerve-shattered Mæcenas as he sat between asthmatic Virgil and blear-eyed Horace, between sighs and tears (as he used to say) and turned his eye and heart away from their physical and moral blemishes to the true worth and love of

the authors of the *Æneid*, *Eclogues*, and *Georgics* and of the *Odes*, *Epodes*, *Satires*, and *Epistles*.

Horace and Uncle Dick voice the dictates of right reason and rational nature and the sober sense of the human race. Not all faults are by their nature mortal, some are only venial and are compatible with true love for a friend and do not make us unworthy of his love and friendship. Some virtues are better than others, some vices are worse than others. Some virtues merit greater rewards on earth and in heaven, some vices deserve greater punishments. Besides, we must make the fundamental distinction between sins which are mortal and those which are only venial. Every civilized state has ever discriminated not only between arson, rape, murder, and other kinds of crime, and between the degrees of murder as less or more deliberate and cold blooded, but also between offenses against its law which are felonies and such as are only misdemeanors. The former constitute the perpetrator simply and absolutely a bad citizen or subject. The perpetrator of the latter remains a good citizen or subject, while doing something prohibited and displeasing and worthy of slight displeasure and punishment. Only barbarians or those who act as such would think of inflicting the extreme penalty of death or long punishment for a misdemeanor. If fathers and mothers had applied to us the maxims of Stoics and other rigorists and puritans, all of us as children over and over deserved to be disinherited, disowned, and cast out from our homes and families.

Given human nature as it is, if these maxims ruled the relations between friend and friend or master and servant or any employer and his employee, then every friend and master and servant and employer and employee would be so exacting as to be impossible, society would not be feasible and humanity would be a race of mutual hissing haters. No one would be worthy of brotherly love or give or receive it.

Almighty God is not less reasonable than human legislators, parents, children, masters, servants, and friends. And His natural law which He engraves on our hearts and His revealed law as proposed to us by His Church draw a wide distinction between mortal and venial sin, between an offense so grievous that it deserves the withdrawal of habitual grace

and friendship and the eternal loss of heaven and the eternal torments of hell; and on the other hand an offense which is an offense and slightly displeases and deserves some minor penalty here and in purgatory and yet leaves the offender a just man, an observer of God's law, a keeper of His commandments, one who has not violated friendship and has not deserved that God withdraw His friendship and grace.

In the fifth tome of his works, on page 215 sq. of the Paris edition printed in 1873, Cardinal Bellarmine treats in his own lucid, copious and exhaustive way the controversy about venial sins or those which *by their concept and nature are not contrary to love for God our neighbor or ourselves*. He there sketches the history of this controversy and the reader who is so minded may there accompany the Roman champion as he follows step by step the various champions of the error that no sin is by its nature venial and that all sin of itself deserves eternal punishment. This error was taught by Jovinian. St. Jerome in his second book against Jovinian explains and solves all of the false reasons of the latter and is heartily endorsed by St. Augustine in his twenty-ninth epistle to St. Jerome.

Jovinian was followed in this error by Pelagius, who was refuted in detail by St. Augustine. The same error was renewed by John Wickliffe, Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon, the Centuriators of Magdeburg, and John Calvin in the latter's antidote to the Council of Trent. The error is thus seen to have been common among the original reformers.

The following is the twentieth of the seventy-nine propositions of Baius which were condemned by the Bulls of Pius V, Gregory XIII, and Urban VIII. "No sin is of its own nature venial but every sin deserves eternal punishment." In this, Baius, the predecessor of Jansenius, was followed by the Jansenists, if not universally at least commonly.

What is the teaching of the Church on the existence of sins which are merely venial? We read in the Council of Trent, session 6, chapter 2:

"For although during this mortal life, men how holy and just soever, at times fall into at least light and daily sins which are also called venial, not therefore do they cease to be just. For that cry of the just 'forgive us our trespasses,' is both humble and true. God forsakes not those who have been once justified by His grace unless He is first forsaken by them."



The same doctrine is explicitly supposed by the Councils and Fathers when they teach that some sins need not to be confessed and deserve only purgatory. The words of the Council of Trent are the same in substance with those found in the canons of the Council of Milevis held in the year 416 against the Pelagians and approved by Pope Innocent I.

Do the Holy Scriptures teach that some sins are merely venial and not mortal? Yes, in many places. The Council of Milevis has the following words in its seventh canon:

“Daniel, who was holy and just, having said in the plural, ‘we have sinned, we have committed iniquity’ (Daniel ix. 5, 15), and other things which he there confesses with humility and veracity, lest it might be deemed, as some think, that he said this not about his own sins but rather about those of his people, afterward said, ‘when I was praying and confessing my sins and the sins of my people (Daniel ix. 20) to the Lord my God.’”

The Scriptures speak of some sins as beams in the eye and of others as motes, of some as camels and others as gnats, of some as deserving hell fire and others as not deserving hell fire, but punishment by the council or judgment. “For every idle word that men shall speak they shall render an account in the day of judgment.” (Matt. xii. 36.) Idle words are not without guilt and we shall render an account for them, but the Scriptures do not and could not say that for them we shall be cast into exterior darkness, etc.

“Be ye therefore followers of God, as most dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us and hath delivered Himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh saints; or obscenity or foolish talking or scurrility, which is to no purpose; but rather giving of thanks. For know you this and understand; That no fornicator or unclean or covetous person (which is a serving of idols) hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. (Eph. v. 1-5.) Not without reason did the Blessed Apostle after denouncing six kinds of sin as to be avoided which were scarcely regarded as sins among the Gentiles, namely, fornication, uncleanness, avarice, filthy words, foolish words, scurrility, added about the first three that those who do such things have no part in the kingdom of Christ and of God. For indeed he intended to teach that the last three ought to be foreign to the sanctified mouth of the faithful, and yet by their nature are not such as exclude from the inheritance of Christ and of God.” (Bellarmine, p. 233.)

St. Paul in 1 Cor. iii. 10 sq. speaks of some works as gold, silver, precious stones and others as wood, hay stubble. He adds, every man's work shall be tried by fire, if his work abide, he shall receive a reward, if it burn he shall suffer loss, but he himself "shall be saved yet so as by fire." The Fathers and Doctors interpret wood, hay, and stubble as venial sins in him who will be saved, and remains just and in God's grace. Thus, for example, St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, St. Cæsarius of Arles, St. Thomas.

The Fathers often compare venial sins to dust, with which we can not keep from soiling our feet or hands or face in our journey through the world. In spite of this, we are clean, simply clean, before God, although in a minor way we are defiled in His sight. St. Augustine writes in his Epistle 104 c. 4.:

"What more absurd or insane can be asserted than that one individual who laughs immoderately and another who devastates his country with fire, should be deemed to sin equally? Or if they are equal because both are delinquencies, mice and elephants are equal because both are animals, flies and eagles are equal because both are beings that fly."

In the Church, the State, the family, and the society of friendship it is universally and rightly recognized that a misdemeanor is not in the same class with a felony. A venial sin is only a mere misdemeanor, a mortal sin of whatever species or grade of malice is a felony.

This distinction holds for every kind of venial and mortal sin. Some sins are subjectively and others objectively venial. True blasphemy, for example, is a grave matter or object. But it is uttered, let us suppose, by a child who has not attained the years of discretion, the full use of reason, so as to be able fully to discriminate between grave and slight moral matters. There is a defect of subjective knowledge of the malice which is inherent in the object of the act. Again it may be uttered by a sick man or a sailor. As we suppose, they have had long habits of blasphemy and have made a good confession with hearty sorrow and detestation for their sins of blasphemy with a firm purpose of not sinning again. But the sick man is suffering great pain, his nerves are shattered and his use of reason is partially impaired. The sailor

is suddenly provoked. Without thinking, or at least without reflecting, they yield to the force of habit, to the impulse and inclination acquired and remaining after many past repeated acts. The sin is subjectively venial, made venial by lack of full knowledge or consent in the subject.

Again, some one steals one cent from an owner who is reasonably unwilling to part with it, or another gives way to some slight excess in eating or drinking or sleeping or laughing or talking, using idle words. The sin, we suppose, is fully deliberate. But the matter is small in itself. The sin is venial objectively, made venial by the smallness of the object. It is especially about the existence of sins objectively venial that the Church joins issue with the Stoics and other puritans. She maintains that these are by their nature venial and do not merit eternal punishment and that they are not in the same class with mortal sins. With the Holy Scripture and St. Augustine she maintains that venial sin is to mortal sin only as the mote to the beam, the gnat to the camel, the dust to filth, the wrinkle to the spot, the mouse to the elephant, the fly to the eagle, the misdemeanor to the felony.

What is the meaning of the word "mortal"? It is that mortal sin is like a wound or sickness or poison that causes death to the soul, the withdrawal of God's gift of habitual grace and the infused virtue of charity which are the soul's principle of supernatural life. On the other hand venial sin is a slight distemper or an immoderation in diet which does not cause this death.

What is the meaning of the word "venial"? Venia means pardon, forgiveness. Mortal sin is not unpardonable, but when the soul is dead by separation from its principle of supernatural life it can be made to live again only by a supernatural act of omnipotence which again infuses habitual grace. *Such* a supernatural divine act is not needed for a soul in the state of grace and the state of venial sin. Habitual grace and habitual charity are still there. The soul has not lost its strong constitution, its principle of recuperation, of self-purging and cleansing. Venial sin is thus pardonable in a way and by a means entirely different from the way and means of pardoning mortal sin.

Is not venial sin as well as mortal sin contrary to right rea-

son and rational nature? Yes and no. Both are opposed to this God-given standard or rule of human acts, both are privations of a good that is due and both are a moral evil. But the opposition, privation and evil are of two essentially different classes and not of the same class. Venial sin is a bad act of a man who if good remains a good man, simply good but bad only in a slight manner. Mortal sin committed by a man previously good makes him simply and absolutely a bad man. A felony makes a citizen a criminal, a bad citizen. A misdemeanor leaves the citizen a good citizen.

Sin is defined as "*Aversio a Creatore et conversio ad creaturam.*"—"Aversion from the Creator and conversion to a creature." "Forsaking the Creator and loving a creature." Does not this apply to venial sin as well as mortal sin? By no means, for it applies only to mortal sin. To some who have not given much thought to this subject, this definition at a first glance may appear less clear than the thing defined, as smoke from light, as cant scholastic jargon of words and sounds and nothing besides. However, he will think differently who considers the following texts:

"Sin is any deed, word, or desire against the eternal law. And the eternal law is the divine reason or the will of God commanding to keep and forbidding to disturb the natural order." (St. Augustine against Faustus, Book XXII, chapter 27.)

"The beginning of the pride of man is to fall off (apostatize) from God. Because his heart is departed from Him that made him." (Ecclus. x. 14.)

In every grave sin man prefers his own false good, his enjoyment of some forbidden fruit, to the divine good or honor.

"Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this; and, ye gates thereof, be very desolate, saith the Lord. For My people hath done two evils, they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living water, and have digged to themselves cisterns, that can hold no water." (Jer. ii. 12, 13.)

"Saying to a stock: Thou art my father. And to a stone: Thou hast begotten me. They have turned their back to Me, and not their face." (Jer. ii. 27.)

"How can you believe, who receive glory one from another, and the glory which is from God alone, you do not seek?" (John v. 44.)

"Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly." (Philipp. iii. 19.)

"For they that are such serve not Christ our Lord but their own belly." (Rom. xvi. 18.)

"For know you this and understand; that no fornicator or unclean or covetous person (which is a serving of idols) hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." (Eph. v. 5.)

Some sins are an immediate injury to God. Thus, thou shalt not have strange gods before Me; thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; thou shalt not violate the Sabbath. Others are an injury to the Church, the State, the family, the human race. Others are an injury to ourselves, thus, for example, intemperance in eating and drinking. Others injure our neighbor individually, thus taking away his property, his good name, which is better than much wealth, his wife, his life. Every sin disturbs the natural order, whether this order be toward God, ourselves, or our neighbor. Every sin is a disorderly conversion or turning of our will or heart or affection to some creature, whether we yield to the concupiscence of the flesh by unreasonable sensual gratification or to the concupiscence of the eyes by unreasonable love of money or other temporal possessions or to the pride of life by disorderly seeking of our own excellence or honor. Each one of these acts in some sense disturbs the natural order, which the eternal law, the divine reason or will of God, commands us to conserve and forbids us to disturb. But is every such conversion to a creature an implicit aversion for the Creator, a forsaking of God? Is every such disorder such that it makes the perpetrator simply a disorderly character? Is it such an offense that it makes him a despiser of the eternal law which it opposes? Does it make one simply an enemy of God so that he is not and can not be God's friend? Is it of such a nature that it violates the greatest and first commandment, the end and perfection and fulness of the law?

The Stoics, Pelagians, Wickliffites, Lutherans, Calvinists, Jansenists said yes, but the Catholic Church has always said no, a thousand times no.

What is the precise difference between mortal and venial sin? All Catholic theologians strikingly agree that mortal sin is a disorder which is so great that it implicitly prizes love for some creature above love for God and His friendship and

sanctifying grace, and that venial sin is a disorder which is not so great, that mortal sin ruptures friendship with God and that venial sin does not, that mortal sin excludes love for God above all things, and that with a will to commit venial sin we may at the same time love God above all things. In fact, he who commits a mortal sin has the following disposition: "I know that by giving way to this satisfaction I grievously displease God and make myself unworthy to be loved by Him as His friend to whom he communicates His own beatitude, His grace here, His glory hereafter. But I will give way anyhow."

He who commits a venial sin has the following disposition: "I know that by giving way to this satisfaction in committing this misdemeanor, I displease God and yet do not make myself unworthy of His loving me as His truly loving friend and of His communicating to me His grace here and His glory hereafter. If I believed this act to be not a misdemeanor but a felony against God's eternal law, I would not do it."

One who has made an act of love for God as a friend for a friend, does take back this love by a grievous disorder but does not take it back by a misdemeanor against his law.

St. Thomas and theologians commonly say that mortal sin is contrary to the eternal law and is properly sin, but that venial sin is not contrary to the law but beside the law, that mortal sin is sin in the proper or perfect sense, that venial sin is the sin only in a sense improper and imperfect. By law here the Angelic Doctor means the great and first commandment to which venial sin is not contrarily opposed so as to exclude love for God above all things. Suppose that some one truly has loved God and has not taken back that love. His will is ordered toward God, tends to God as infinitely good. He then commits a venial sin. This is not an act of love. It impedes or retards the action of love in that heart, that tending to God as the terminus, but it does not throw the will off the track of love or move it toward the contrary terminus of hate or contempt. Suppose that a body is heavy and gravitates toward its center, the earth. You restrain its falling without destroying its gravity, or making it a vacuum or weightless. The tending is there. Likewise, says the Angelic Doctor, mortal sin is contrary to order, contrary to the eternal

law of love, a disorder about the end of our being and life, venial sin is a disorder only about the means and not about the end. According to him again, venial sin is like dust or something else in the eye which impedes seeing, but mortal sin is like something destroying the optic nerve. If venial sin is only a partial conversion or turning to the creature as in a slight immoderateness of diet, and mortal sin is a conversion to a creature as its last end or its idol as when one makes his belly his god, and if thus mortal sin is an aversion from the Creator and venial sin is not, and if every mortal sin is a felony and every venial sin only a misdemeanor, then they are not sin in the same sense.

Venial sin which is venial subjectively on account of imperfect knowledge of the mind or consent of the will is manifestly sin only in an imperfect sense. Venial sin which is venial objectively, on account of the smallness of the matter, is also sin only in an imperfect sense, as we see from the comparison of the misdemeanor to the felony. Mortal sin is enmity to God, venial sin is not; mortal sin is an act of war, and venial sin is consistent with the state of peace toward God, ourselves, and our neighbor.

Hence it manifestly follows that the difficulty of loving God based on the difficulty of avoiding venial sins as if they excluded friendship for God or love for God, is based on an absurdity. Friendship implies, firstly, true worth or worthiness to be loved as a friend; and secondly, it implies true love or benevolence by which one wishes to give the good things he has to his friend as to a second self. Venial sin does not exclude from the human soul true worth or worthiness to be loved by God and neither does it exclude from that soul lovingness for God as a friend. Therefore, venial sin does not exclude our love for God or God's love for us.

God is not less reasonable or kind to human beings than are human legislators, judges, executives, parents, masters, or friends. He has told us by revelation that He regards some faults as motes or gnats, as misdemeanors that in themselves could not reasonably cause a friend to cease to be a friend. According to His code and procedure, if any one accuses us to Him of not being His friend and grounds the accusation on a venial sin or misdemeanor, He rules the accusation out

of His court and refuses the accuser a hearing for the reason that the alleged fact does not constitute a cause for such action. He who commits venial sin does not forsake God and His friendship, and, as we have seen above in the Council of Trent, "God forsakes not those who have been once fortified by His grace unless He is first forsaken by them."

Let us look back again at the history of this question. The twentieth proposition of Baius is:

"No sin is by its nature venial, but every sin merits eternal punishment."

No human being without a special privilege such as was granted to Mary Immaculate, the Mother of God, has ever been known to avoid all subjectively venial sins, all semideliberate wrong deeds. We have the physical power to avoid each one of these acts. If we did not have such physical power and it were physically impossible for us to avoid it, then the act would not be free and would not be a sin for us. But temptations, solicitations, inclinations to at least slight evil are so frequent, follow each other in such close quick succession and keep on coming against us and persistently attacking us for such a long continuous space of time, that it is morally impossible for our human frailty even with the actual graces which are given us in the present order of providence, not to grow weary and half yield from time to time and even very often. We say it is physically possible not to give a half consent to *any one* of these interior evil impulses. We have free will and sufficient actual graces and they together make it physically possible, constitute a cause or force sufficient to overcome any single one of these temptations. We say it is morally impossible for us not to yield *to some*. The moral impossibility is constituted by the great difficulty impeding the exercise of our sufficient will power aided by graces such as are always given or at least are ready to be given if we ask.

Well, suppose a being pledges himself to be my friend only on the condition and so long as I do not yield to any such semideliberate fault. He knows that by such an act I, who was his friend, do not cease to love him, but he tells me that after such an act he will cease to love me and even treat me as a mortal enemy. I can not help saying to myself that this



is an unreasonable being, that he is unfair and unjust in inflicting a penalty unproportionate to the fault, that he is cruel, not good, not truly loving, and he is all this to one who truly loves him. Such a human being is unlovable and unloving, never had or will have or deserve to have a true friend. A god believed to be like this was never loved as a friend by those who had this belief about him.

We have considered semideliberate venial sins of human frailty, sins venial subjectively. Let us consider also fully deliberate venial sins, sins venial objectively, the matter or object of which is not grave but small in itself. The Council of Trent tells us that no one without a special privilege such as was granted to Mary, the Mother of God, is free from venial sins. Here it refers more specially to semideliberate, subjectively venial sins. Numbers of pious souls not only in the past and in Europe but in the present and in America have, with the counsel of the confessor, made and kept a vow never to commit a fully deliberate venial sin. Such sins are worse in themselves and in their consequences than sins of mere frailty. However, occasions and temptations to commit them are most frequent and constant and to avoid them all for a long time is heroism. Such offenses against human persons are not an implicit virtual forsaking of those persons, do not cause the offender to cease to be a true good servant, citizen, subject or friend, or to cease to love another as a friend. Our Lord has told us that He regards such faults as motes and gnats. He who believes that his master, country, father, or friend should and will cast him off and punish him as a mortal enemy for any such venial sin or misdemeanor can not love as a friend one who is believed to be such a tyrant. If we believed God to be such it would be not only difficult but absolutely impossible for any one to love Him as a friend, and there could not be true charity on earth in any human heart.

Let us come back again to the condemned assertion of Baius:

"No sin is by its nature venial, but every sin merits eternal punishment."

The essential difference between the Catholic and the non-Catholic positions is contained in the term "by its nature."

Why is an act of the will a sin? Because it is not in conformity and is in difformity with the standard of human acts. This standard is right reason, rational nature, the order natural for a rational animal, and commanded by the divine reason or will of God the Creator to be conserved and forbidden to be disturbed.

Catholic theologians and philosophers commonly agree with the Stoic philosophers in recognizing right reason as the standard constituting moral goodness. However, if any philosophers hold that right reason alone, without God commanding to follow it and forbidding to depart from it, constitutes complete morality, complete moral obligation, complete virtue or complete sin, then and there Catholic theologians and philosophers part company with them. Virtue and sin in their very concept or notion contain the idea of a law and a lawgiver. Ignorance of the existence of such a lawgiver would be inexcusable. How many little books are now being printed in France and imposed on the children in the public schools, to teach morality without God! We may see notices of such new books in the numbers of the "*Ami du clergé*" of 1914. Perhaps France is the last place in the world where this plan will have any chance to succeed. The French are perhaps the most logical race on earth. Tell a French child that morality without God is the only morality, and if he believes you in that, he will soon think some for himself and say to himself that your morality without God is no morality and he is independent of all your morality and is free to do as he pleases, and not obliged to do anything as right or shun anything as wrong.

But let us come back from this digression on books. Moral evil is a privation of a good, that is due, a privation of conformity with the standard, rule, measure of human acts. It is, then, a privation. There are some privations which admit no degrees. Such is the privation of life. A man who has been dead for a second, in death not merely apparent but real, with the soul, the principle of life, separated from the body, is just as dead as he whose bones have been reduced to dust. But there are other privations which do admit of degrees. Hold a plumb line from the top of various leaning poles or walls and some of them may be found to be *more* leaning and more out

of plumb than others. Each one of a number of garments may not fit or become you. But some may misfit you or misbecome you more than others. Similarly some acts may be in greater crookedness or depravity, or be more misfitting and misbecoming in relation to their standard of right reason or rational nature. And some sins may thus be greater than others, in spite of the dictum of the Stoics. And some faults may not even take one off the natural road of rectitude prescribed by God to men, who are pilgrims traveling on the earthly way to God and heaven, and yet may impede or retard their progress on it. Such faults are by their nature venial, by their nature do not make a man a bad man, by their nature do not cause one who has loved God as a friend to take back that love and cease to have the heart of a friend, by their nature do not cause him to be unworthy to be regarded and loved by God as a friend.

Wickliffe and Calvin taught that all sins are by their nature grievous and deserve eternal punishment. However, according to them, the elect or predestined once in grace never fall from it and by the mercy of God to the elect and not by the nature of the fault, neither these small faults nor others are imputed by God unto punishment. Luther himself ably refuted these heresiarchs. In fact, Adam, David, and St. Peter, etc., were predestined and in grace and yet fell from it when they sinned. It is absurd on the face of it to assert that according to the providence of Infinite Sanctity, predestination insures such a license for crime or for misdemeanor.

Luther held that no sins are venial by their nature and that all sins merit eternal punishment. But he maintained that by the mercy of God neither greater nor smaller sinful acts are imputed for punishment to those who have faith, confiding faith that the merits of Christ are imputed to them individually and cover up their sins before the eyes of God. This is an application of his precept, "sin strongly but believe more strongly." According to this absurd teaching, license to commit crimes and misdemeanors is issued by the Divine Wisdom and Sanctity for hysteria and the only sin which is imputed, is lack of this hysteria. The Catholic teaching is that venial sins are by their nature only misdemeanors and not felonies against the Infinite Majesty and eternal law, the

divine reason or will of God commanding the natural or rational order to be conserved and forbidding it to be violated, that venial sin does not contain a cessation of love of friendship on the part of man toward God, does not deserve that God cease to regard and love man as a friend or cease to pour on man the flood of the sunlight of His supernatural gifts of habitual grace and habitual charity.

According to Calvin or Luther, when a person who is predestined or has confiding faith commits a deliberate small fault, he is treated as if he had not committed it, and God acts in disregard of truth and justice. According to the Catholic doctrine, God looks on the just man who commits a deliberate venial fault according as that man does and as he is in truth, as one guilty of a misdemeanor and deserving of punishment proportioned to a misdemeanor, but not as deserving of perpetual separation of one who is a friend of God from God and His friendship. According to these respective schools the multitude of sins is covered by predestination, by hysterical confiding faith or hope, or by charity. The whole Catholic system is thus based on truth and charity.

The Lutherans, Calvinists, and Jansenists all pictured their god as a being who regards every one of our faults as by its nature grievous and deserving of eternal separation from him in the torments of hell, and they all said that it is impossible even for the just man with the graces which he receives to love God above all things for His own sake.

Such a being is neither lovable nor loving. However, the true God is not such a being, He is lovable and loving and His command to love Him is a yoke that is sweet, a burden that is light, a command that is not heavy.

## CHAPTER XV

### *EVILS WHICH ARE IN VENIAL SIN OR FOLLOW FROM IT AND EVILS WHICH ARE NOT IN IT OR DO NOT FOLLOW FROM IT*

**I**N THE preceding chapter we have shown that there are some sins which by their nature are venial and do not merit eternal punishment. We have demonstrated the truth of this proposition from common sense or natural human reason, the consent and voice of the human race, and from explicit definitions of the Church and from clear texts of the Sacred Scriptures and the Holy Fathers. Besides, we have explained according to the mind of St. Thomas *how* this is true, how venial and mortal sin are not in the same class, how he who commits venial sin does not forsake God, how he may be still a friend toward God and keep God as his Friend, how he may still love God for His own sake above all things and still elicit acts of perfect love and perfect contrition. In interpreting the mind of the Angelic Doctor on this point, we have held under our eyes his great Dominican commentators, Cardinals Cajetan and Gotti, and his great Jesuit commentators, Suarez and Cardinals Bellarmine and Billot. We have held under our eyes also a number of other Catholic writers on dogmatic and moral theology, and we have found all these greater and minor authors in striking unanimity on this point and in marvelous agreement with the substance of the doctrine of the Angel of the Schools. Therefore, it is defined Catholic truth that some sins from their nature are venial and do not merit eternal punishment, and it is a theologically certain truth that the will to commit venial sin does not preclude from the soul acts of perfect love and perfect contrition.

This latter truth is new to some readers and may have not been taught or dwelt on in the books which they have read or even in some courses of theology attended by some of the clergy. When first heard this truth almost revolutionized some souls who before had had no such idea of God's goodness and reasonableness and justice and fairness and con-

siderateness to His friends, or of the sweetness of His yoke and the lightness of His burden and commandments.

However, maybe there soon after came a reaction. Some had perhaps never been taught explicitly the contrary of this truth, but had been left under impressions contrary to it. Their early lessons on the inherent malice and the evil consequences of deliberate venial sin, if true, can not be contrary to these truths. Lessons contrary to truth are not truths. If any sermons or exhortations or treatises on the practice of perfection contradict the Church, the Scriptures, the Fathers, or the unanimous teaching of the theologians, the former class of authorities tinctured with false sentimentality must give way to the latter with their solid grounds of revelation and sound reason.

How slow some of us were to fully take in the rulings of Pius X that all who are free from mortal sin and have a right intention have sufficient dispositions not only for monthly and weekly but also for frequent and daily communion; and that no confessor must deter from daily communion any one who has these dispositions; and that freedom from venial sin or from affection for them is most desirable and yet not necessary for the daily fruitful reception of the Sacrament of Love. Our previous impressions, if not our explicit instructions and convictions, had perhaps been contrary to the statutes and desires of the Holy Father. To eradicate such long standing and deep-rooted false convictions or impressions, many explanations have had to be made to the people, besides constantly repeating to them the Holy Father's regulations and wishes. Similarly, it is now deemed useful, after solidly demonstrating that venial sin is no obstacle to the substance of the love of friendship between man and God, to go further and in detail grant all the evil that exists in venial sin or follows from it, but deny all the evil that does not exist in it or does not follow from it. We will not try to tell the reader all that is knowable about this subject, but will treat only what might puzzle some minds, or tempt them to fear that the morality of the Catholic theologians is lax, or what might influence them not to cordially accept or practise the doctrine that love for God and perfect contrition are easy in this respect. These explanations will smooth the way in the reader's mind for

appreciating our proposition's strongest proofs in the chapters yet to come.

Let us first consider the question of laxity. We submit the following passage from St. Alphonsus cited by Gury—Ballerini—Palmieri under n. 153, v. i.:

"It is marvelous how some consider no way of saving souls safer than to lead them by the paths that are the more rough. We will be bound to render an account to God not only for excessive indulgence, but also for excessive rigidity by which consciences are ensnared. According to St. Antoninus the proper qualification for the latter method is 'edification for hell.' This is appropriately explained by Cabassatius from the doctrine of St. Bonaventure. After detesting immoderate benignity, the latter reprobates immoderate rigor. As he says, this rigor forces on men things which are too arduous and blocks their way to eternal salvation, damns those who would else be saved, and drives to desperation those who are conscious of their own weakness. It comes to pass that men full of miseries, hearing excessively rigorous teaching, believe or fear that there is mortal sin where it does not exist. However, they are overwhelmed by the difficulty of the matter and on account of an erroneous conscience, sin mortally and are damned."

Some of our non-Catholic friends might have feared that the defined Catholic dogma that some sins are merely venial by their very nature might lead to laxity. The puritanical dogma that all sins by their nature are grievous and merit eternal punishment, in practice leads and has led to still greater laxity and even to loss of all regard for religion or morals. The process by which this rigorism operates in souls is brought home to us by the above words of Saints Alphonsus, Antoninus, and Bonaventure. The truth of their position is manifest from the terse, graphic statement of the essential practical tendency of rigorism. Do we need to remind any sober-minded reader that the Church has never taught that *no* sins are grievous? How could this be deduced from the teaching that *some* are venial?

What is the practical, sane rule of faith and reason by which we can learn what sins are mortal and what are venial? Conscience awakes with us from our sleep, rises with us from our couch, and follows our every outward act and word and even our every secret thought and volition at every second of our life, from the dawn of our reason to our last lucid moment up to the separation of our souls from our bodies. It

is an ever-present mentor, dictating that this act is to be done as right, or that is to be avoided as wrong, or that another is preferable as better, or that still another is permitted as morally indifferent. It constantly stands guard against our unreasonable likes and dislikes, our concupiscences of the flesh, our concupiscences of the eyes, our pride of life, our passions, our prejudices, our pride, our disorderly fears, favors, or affections. Moral principles affect all of our acts. How different they are in this from the theorems of geometry. Euler was one of the most voluminous of writers on pure mathematics. He said that not one of the propositions in his tomes would be uncontroverted if it affected our daily lives as do all the maxims of morals and faith. Plato, Aristotle, Marcus Aurelius, and other pagans had keen intelligences and much moral training and said many noble things about morality. And yet, into what gross moral errors they all fell! How easy one race or class is on the faults common among themselves, and how hard on the faults common among other races or classes. This tendency is even amusing to the traveler who observes the unfavorable views against others in various countries or in various sections of the same country, especially where the inhabitants are stationary and not migratory. Partiality to self and evil-mindedness to others are marked in the reciprocal misjudgments of old and young, strong and weak, rich and poor, educated and illiterate, refined and rude with regard to the faults peculiar to the other class. Nearly all

“Compound for sins they’re not inclined to  
By damning those they have no mind to.”

Very many have a tinge of the policy of the pursued thief who joined with the pursuing crowd in the cry “Stop, thief!” that another individual might be thought to be the thief and captured, while he, the real thief, escaped. How many society people are such slaves of their whimsical fashionable conventionality and etiquette that they seriously regard a blunder as worse than a crime! How similar they are in this to some barbarous communities which lynched without trial for stealing a horse, and easily acquitted almost without trial for wantonly taking a human life! What a trifle to many minds are race suicide and divorce, which tend to depopulate fam-



ilies, nations, and the whole human race! How many millions cast their votes for pretended apostles of liberty, fraternity, equality, progress, and civilization, whose gospel is that private property, sacramental marriage, and supernatural religion are the trinity of evil from which these apostles promise to redeem the human race. The socialist paper of New York, "The Call," on page 12 of its issue of May 3, 1914, confesses that these are the three fundamental articles of the socialist creed, that they summarize the position of Morris Hillquit against Dr. Augustine Ryan in the debates printed in "Everybody's Magazine," and afterward brought out in book form.

How much truth in Benjamin Franklin's cynically witty commentary on Aristotle's definition of man as a rational animal! "Yes," said the American philosopher, with Greek-like wit, "man is an *animal* who will find a plausible reason for justifying anything which he likes to do."

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are My ways exalted above your ways and My thoughts above your thoughts." (Is. lv. 8, 9.) For the multitude and even for the learned, and, perhaps, especially for the latter class, to know what is right or wrong and particularly to know what is grievous and what is only venial matter, to know this easily, certainly and without admixture of error, we need the revelation of God, and, besides, we need an infallible living interpreter of this revelation.

About some classes of sins the Holy Scriptures say that they exclude from any portion with Christ or God, that they merit death, eternal punishment, exclusion from the kingdom of heaven, that they are hated or abominated by God, or they denounce woe to those who do such things. The matter or object of these acts inflicts a grave injury on God, the human race, the Church, the State, or the soul or body of our neighbor or of ourself, or it seriously violates some grave positive precept of God, the Church, the State, or parents or some other legitimate authority reasonably ordering a thing for the common good.

The two preceding sentences are found in substance in all Catholic moralists where they treat this question. Gerson, the

celebrated Chancellor of the University of Paris, adds this commentary on those maxims:

“Teachers ought not to be quick to assert that a sin is mortal unless they are most certain of the matter. For by such excessively rigid and narrow assertions men are by no means drawn out of the mire of sin but are sunk into it the deeper for the less hope they have.”

St. Raymond of Pennafort adds:

“Be not prone to judge that a sin is mortal unless this is evident to you from a scriptural text of whose interpretation you are certain.”

So much has been said, and it seems more than enough, to allay suspicions of non-Catholic friends who had not reflected on the Catholic article of faith that some sins are by their nature venial, and who had dreaded lest this article would spell laxity either in principle or in practice.

For abundance and not from necessity we add the following further explanations. Some thoughtless boys hearing the teaching that some things are only venial sins, have taken this to mean almost the same as that they may do them. Thus, a young priest was once helping in a mission going on in a small village, and told the boys of the catechism class that to steal a few apples was only a venial sin. That night each one of those urchins helped himself so plentifully from the orchard of a certain poor old lady, that all her trees were left bare and she had to spend a nice little sum of cash to fill her bin with her usual store of apples for the winter. That young priest was obliged to complete his lesson and tell each one of the practical jokers that he was a conspirator and was, under pain of mortal sin, bound in default of others to restore all the stolen apples. Each pocketful may have been small in itself, but so many pocketfuls added together made several great basketfuls, a grave matter and a grave injury to that poor lady. The small matters in conscience coalesced on account of the conspiracy. He who systematically embezzles small sums of cash every day for weeks and months until he has arrived at a grave sum is similarly guilty of a mortal sin of theft. As we suppose, there was the intention from the start of using as his own a grave sum which was not his own.

Some acts in themselves are only venial sins, but on account of the great dignity of the person or some other circumstance cause grave scandal and serious injury to souls. In the abstract they are venial, but in the concrete circumstances may be mortal.

Stealing twenty-five cents from a millionaire, a great bank, or the United States does not inflict a grave injury on any of those persons or on the public, and is a venial sin only, but stealing the same amount from a poor widow who earns only that much by her day's toil, and perhaps spends less than that for her daily support, does her a grave injury, and is held by all moralists to be a mortal sin and to deserve eternal punishment.

Would a thousand venial sins added together be equal in malice to one mortal sin? If this question is taken at its mere face value, the answer is, No. A thousand misdemeanors do not make a citizen as bad as one felony in the eyes of law or reason. A thousand lies of fun or exaggeration or excuse which do no harm to our neighbor, do not make a man as bad as one lie that seriously impairs our neighbor's good name, which is more precious than great riches. However, he who thus loses love for truth is much readier to bear false witness against his neighbor than he who hates all abuse of speech by any lie.

Parents who neglect to correct children for their venial sins should not expect them to grow up with good characters, and should blame themselves for their offspring soon becoming great criminals. What is the usual way by which men and women become great liars, great thieves, great backbiters who love to spit foul poison on fair names, bad tempered, drunkards, lascivious, heretics, infidels? They had often told small lies, committed petty larcenies, carried tales about minor weaknesses, given way to pride and impatience, tumbled here and there, disregarded modesty, nature's barrier against lust, neglected Mass and religious instructions, etc. These faults were uncorrected by parents, perhaps were encouraged by them or by evil comrades. Temptations to grievous faults soon came to them, as they do to all of us, and as they do sooner and oftener to those who have not watched over themselves or prayed to God for His grace, which is morally neces-

sary to overcome even one grave temptation. Those who had long walked on the slippery edge soon fell into the deep abyss, those who had not kept their eyes fixed on God and His law and heaven, but on the wealth or honors or pleasures of the world, became so fascinated and intoxicated as to obscure their own reason and weaken their own will, and they fell into great crimes by little and little.

It has happened that those who had been faithful in small things have suddenly become faithless in great. Ancestral oaks whose roots were sound and deep and had withstood the storms of many winters have been suddenly uprooted and prostrated by a hurricane. Presidents of banks after a long life of honesty and honor have made one great thoughtless slip and loss and have then been tempted to use the bank's assets to speculate, in the hope of recouping and saving their own reputations, and have yielded to this strong temptation to be dishonest.

But this is not the usual way of falling into great dishonesty, which generally has been preceded and prepared by many minor dishonesties.

He who has fallen into grievous sin by little and little rises from sin with much greater difficulty. He has so many weaknesses and bad habits that he has almost to be regenerated; to be born again, and requires for this almost a miracle of God's interior supernatural actual graces. The tree whose roots were sound may be easily raised and replanted and may soon again strike deep root and grow and flourish. But the tree which, with slowly decayed roots, fell from an ordinary blast can not be made to grow again without a miracle. Those who have systematically embezzled small sums will never be trusted, and many will give another chance to him who fell under the stress of a first great temptation and was not a habitual criminal.

Almighty God ever gives sufficient actual graces to all to avoid sins and save their own souls. The Spirit breathes where it wills, and greatest actual graces have been given to those who have before been wicked and impious and have persecuted the saints and have not responded to graces previously given, as we see from the cases of St. Matthew, holy David and St. Paul. But it is usual for Divine Providence

to be more generous and give more abundant helps to those who have been more generous to God and have helped themselves. And those who commit frequent deliberate venial sins have been stingy.

There may be many causes of our not confiding in the goodness and promises of God when we ask His graces, and of our then hesitating and fluctuating like the waves of the sea. But deliberate attachment to venial sin, a fixed purpose not to give up our petty stingy ways, and the consciousness that God sees this pettiness in our souls always make it hard for us to raise our mind or heart to God and look Him in the face, and confidently beg Him to be generous to us, who are coolly determined not to be generous in our friendship to Him. The mother's scrutinizing gaze sees through the eyes and face of the guileless child all the workings in its limpid soul. What a difference in the upturned face and ingenuous candor and steady gaze into the mother's eyes of the child who wishes to be very good, and the hung-down head and furtive glance at the mother's eyes of the child who asks equity without the will to do equity, or rather who asks generosity without the will to do generosity. And what a greater difference in the prayer of one who is generous to God and the prayer of him who asks the divine generosity and is resolved to continue venial sins and be ungenerous.

"Seek first the kingdom of God and His justice and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. vi. 33.)

The more generously we seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, the more abundantly shall all the things which are for our true good be added unto us by God. And the less generously we seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, the less cause have we to hope for God's generosity to us, and we know that we have less cause, and we know that our will to continue in our venial faults is ungenerosity and that God searches the bottom of our hearts. And, thus, the will to commit venial sins necessarily diminishes our confidence in prayer.

"The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, saying: Ask what thou wilt that I should give thee. And Solomon said: Thou hast shown great mercy to Thy servant David, my father, even as he walked before Thee in truth, and justice, and an upright heart with

Thee; and Thou hast kept Thy great mercy for him, and hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O Lord God, Thou hast made Thy servant king instead of David my father, and I am but a child, and know not how to go out and come in. And Thy servant is in the midst of Thy people which Thou hast chosen, an immense people, which can not be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore to Thy servant an understanding heart, to judge Thy people, and discern between good and evil. For who shall be able to judge this people, Thy people which is so numerous? And the word was pleasing to the Lord that Solomon had asked such a thing. And the Lord said to Solomon: Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life or riches, nor the lives of thy enemies, but hast asked for thyself wisdom to discern judgment, behold I have done for thee according to thy words, and have given thee a wise and understanding heart, insomuch that there hath been no one like thee before thee, nor shall arise after thee. Yea, and the things also which thou didst not ask I have given thee; to wit, riches and glory, so that no one hath been like thee among the kings in all days heretofore. And if thou wilt walk in My ways, and keep My precepts, and My commandments, as thy father walked, I will lengthen thy days." (3 Kings iii. 5-14.)

In the preceding third verse we read: "Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the precepts of David, his father." He sought first the kingdom of God and His justice. In his life and prayer he sought first that the justice of God might reign in his own heart and in the hearts of God's people, of which he was king. This generous disposition in his heart was what moved God to be so generous to him and add all the rest unto him. Indeed, one who is resolved to continue in habits of venial sin may still love God and walk in His ways, but he does not love God generously or run or fly in His ways with dilated heart. And he knows that God sees this disposition, and when he asks for great things he has not the faith which moves mountains.

Venial sin does not turn the heart, the will from God and His ways, but it does turn the heart, the will, too much to creatures, to self and self-gratification by some slight indulgence in the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes, or the pride of life, by some slightly disorderly attachment to our bodies or to earthly possessions or honors. It is manifest how any slight smack of worldliness of any kind retards the soul's love for heaven, virtue, and God, for fervor in loving God and in exercising this love by keeping

all the divine commandments in conforming our mind and will to the divine Reason and Will. Therefore, venial sin is not only evil in the consequence of disposing the soul to fall by little and little into great sins, but it is also manifestly evil in the consequence of hindering or retarding much good, and of thus diminishing the fervor and luster of the virtue of charity. Who are those who have shown great magnanimity in the vicissitudes which try men's souls and call for heroism? They are those soldiers of Christ who have previously drilled their souls the most thoroughly and constantly in the practice of humility, meekness, self-denial, piety, and charity in the many minor trials of ordinary life.

But apart from all consequences venial sin is a great evil in itself. It is always unbecoming to a man and Christian, it is a moral evil, an evil to the soul, a misdemeanor against the law and pleasure of the Infinite Majesty of God, our loving Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, who says to us, "O! My people, what could I have done for you that I have not done?" If we glance at the earth, the waters, the air, the sky, the body, the soul, the Church, the Sacraments, the Cross, the Tabernacle, Heaven—wherever we look our eye is dazzled with the ocean of the light of God's generosity shining on us, and venial sin is ungenerosity to Him and is cold, ungrateful neglect and even abuse of the bounties of the Heart which has so generously loved us and yearns to be generously loved in return.

Venial sin has been punished with early death in greatest saints, and is punished in the elect who are already saved with the flames of purgatory, and that by the wise, holy, just God, their Eternal Friend.

It is in itself a far greater evil than loss of friends, fortune, reputation, health, or life. Such losses are not losses, not an evil to our souls or to God, do not make us guilty before God or deserving of punishment by Him.

"What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer loss to his own soul, or what exchange shall a man give for his own soul." (Matt. xvi. 36.)

Nay, what doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer any loss or harm to his own soul? While we are committing one venial sin, we are retarding or impeding our

soul from using that precious moment of time for gaining an additional degree of eternal wealth, pleasure, honor, responding to an additional degree of love for God. And what is the brief possession of the whole world to the eternal possession of one degree more of God's infinite beauty and goodness?

As we promised the reader, we have granted all the evil which is in venial sin or follows from it. Therefore, in itself it is an evil which is small only in comparison with mortal sin, but it is so great that other evils which are not moral, spiritual, and do not incur divine displeasure or punishment can not be rightly compared with it. The venial sin of a soul in the state of grace merits from the justice of God a pain of sense, and merits even the pain of loss of God to this extent that it retards it in purgatory and delays the possession of God in heaven, into which nothing defiled can enter.

Again, venial sin diminishes substantial devotion or promptness for prayer and other acts of religion. It also diminishes sensible devotion or consolation, that abundance of confidence, joy, and peace which overflow from the soul into the body, so that not only our heart but also our flesh may exult in the living God.

Venial sin thus diminishes the efficacy of prayer, the ordinary means of obtaining God's actual graces. It diminishes the generosity of our soul, and thus may automatically move God to diminish the generosity of His abundant actual graces to our soul.

Semideliberate or half consent to a temptation to commit mortal sin may easily be followed by full consent to mortal sin. Eve's listening to the temptation of Satan prepared the way for full compliance with his evil solicitations. If from the start she had cut him short as Our Lord did, she would have been safe from danger. Frequent deliberate consent to objectively small or venial sins weakens previously acquired habits of the virtue. This is true tepidity or lukewarmness, whence God "begins to vomit us out of His mouth," according to the strong language in the Apocalypse. This preparation of the soul to fall by little and little into mortal sins is the greatest of all the evil consequences of venial sin.

Does venial sin diminish the soul's degree of *habitual*



grace and *merits*? The simple answer is, no, it does not. This is the teaching of St. Thomas and of theologians generally. If any ascetic writers say the contrary, they are not to be regarded.

As we have seen, venial sin causes a cessation of gain of good works and of habitual grace and of merits. From this cessation of gain there emerges a loss of *additional* habitual grace and merits, but no loss of habitual grace or merits already hoarded. This is why we answer simply that venial sin does *not* in the proper sense diminish habitual grace and merits.<sup>1</sup>

Can he who has not sorrow for all or even any of his venial sins make an act of love for God above all things for His own sake, and an act of perfect contrition by which the guilt of mortal sins and the eternal punishment due to them are remitted without the actual reception of a Christian sacrament? Yes. And this answer is seen to be true from the preceding two chapters.

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix II, page 558

## CHAPTER XVI

### NO SPECIAL INTENSITY OR DURATION IN THE ACT OF LOVE IS REQUIRED FOR JUSTIFICATION

**H**E WHO loves God so much that he has hearty sorrow and detestation for all mortal sins committed in the past and a firm resolve not to commit any mortal sins in the future has the perfect contrition with which he is justified without the actual reception of a Christian sacrament. There is not required any further special degree of intensity or duration in his love, or resolve, or detestation, or sorrow.

In previous chapters we have sown seeds from which here we will reap the harvest. There we carried many outworks of our foe, here we will close in on him and demolish his citadel.

How do we know that God always immediately justifies, sanctifies and loves as His friends all who have the substance of love for Him? From clear texts of the Scriptures and Fathers, and from explicit decrees of the Church, and from the authority and reasons of her theologians, among whom her canonized doctors are perhaps the most pronounced.

The Holy Scriptures teach that the remission of sins and the friendship of God are ever joined with the act of love or charity. "I love those who love Me." (Proverbs viii. 17.) Manifestly the meaning is: "I have the substance of love and friendship for all those who have the substance of love and friendship for Me." I speak indefinitely and universally and exclude all qualification or limitation. I say "I love" in the present, immediately, and not "I will love" in the future. I say, "I love all and any who love me and I thus positively exclude all limitations to persons having higher intensity or longer duration of love." These remarks apply also to each one of the following texts:

"He that loveth Me, shall be loved by My Father and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." (John xiv. 21.) Obviously the meaning is: "shall be *immediately* loved." "I will immediately love."

"Every one that loveth his neighbor [for God's sake] is born of God and knoweth God." (1 John iv. 7.)

"Every one who is born of God, doth no sin since the seed of God abideth in him." (1 John iii. 9.)

"God is charity and he who abideth in charity abideth in God and God in him." (1 John iv. 16.)

"When thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him: if, however, thou seekest in thy whole heart and in the total tribulation of thy soul." (Deut. iv. 29.)

"The impiety of the impious shall not harm him in *whatsoever* day he shall be converted from his impiety." (Ezech. xxxiii. 12.)

"If the wicked do penance for all his sins which he hath committed and keep all My commandments and do judgment and justice, living he shall live, and shall not die. I will not remember all his iniquities that he hath done: In his justice which he hath wrought, he shall live. Is it my will that a sinner should die, saith the Lord God, and not that he should be converted from his ways and live? But if the just man turn himself away from his justice and do iniquity according to all the abominations which the wicked man useth to work, shall he live? All his justices which he hath done shall not be remembered. In the prevarication by which he hath prevaricated and in his sin which he hath committed, in them he shall die. And you have said: The way of the Lord is not right. Hear ye, therefore, O house of Israel: Is it my way that is not right, and are not rather your ways perverse? For when the just turneth himself away from his justice and committeth iniquity, he shall die therein: in the injustice that he hath wrought he shall die. And when the wicked turneth himself away from his wickedness, which he hath wrought, and doeth judgment and justice, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth and turneth away himself from all his iniquities which he hath wrought, he shall surely live and not die. . . . Be converted and do penance for all your iniquities: and iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, by which you have transgressed, and make to yourselves a new heart, and a new spirit: and why will you die, O house of Israel? For I desire not the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God, return ye and live." (Ezech. xviii. 21-32.)

In these passages of Ezechiel there is no explicit mention made of love or charity as the motive of penance, of turning away from impieties, transgressions, prevarications, perverse ways, injustices, sins, etc., or of conversion to God and His commandments, ways, justice, etc. However, there is mention of conversion in the whole heart, and of the penance or contrition with which the sinner is justified. If there is any conversion or penance with which he is justified it is with the most perfect, that motived by love; it most perfectly turns

him to God and away from sin. It was with this alone, according to the general interpretation of theologians, that he was then justified. It is here explicitly said that God *always immediately* justifies the thus perfectly converted sinner. Limitations to special intensity or duration of such perfect conversion are thus positively and openly excluded. Such were the will and plan of God as to the ever immediate efficacy of the penance of love in the old law. How gratuitous and absurd to say that He attaches less efficacy to an act of love in the new law of love!

As is manifest and as has been explained, some grave sins are objectively greater than others which also are grave; murder is greater than theft, etc. Besides, the same objects which are gravely sinful and definitively willed, may be willed less or more intensely, as in the case of murder in the second or first degree, according to less or greater deliberation and malice. However, for God to turn away from the sinner it is enough that the sinner turn away from God by a definitive though less intense will of a gravely evil object. What reason, then, for fancying that God does not convert Himself to the sinner who is converted to God by true love and friendship, though in a less intense degree?

God requires for justification the substance of the acts of faith and hope. These may be less or more intense. He does not require for justification any special degree of faith or hope, if one only has their substance. Why, then, fancy that He requires for justification a special degree of intensity in the act of love? What is asserted without any reason or proof is fairly denied even though we give no positive reason for denying. Certainly in the Scriptures or Fathers or other sources of knowledge of revealed truth we see no reason for the assertion that God requires some special intensity of love for contrition to be perfect and to justify. Thus, even though we saw in those sources no *positive* reason for denying that assertion, yet it would be fair and reasonable to deny it. However, as a fact, we have seen many such positive reasons.

Moreover, let the reader recall what has been said about venial sin. Manifestly, he who has the deliberate will to commit venial sin may still love God and be a friend to God. And according to the texts of the Scriptures and Fathers cited in

the present chapter, God loves all who love Him, and is a friend to all who are friends to Him. Thus, as is manifest, He loves and justifies all who have the substance of love for Him, even though they have the deliberate will to commit venial sin.

Further on we will ask the rigorists to declare distinctly what are the degrees of intensity of love, and what is the length of its duration, required by God for justification. We will hear some assigning one degree or length, and others another. Then we will see that their assertions are not only gratuitous and unsupported by any reason, and not only contrary to the Scriptures, Fathers, and decrees of the Church, and the teaching of theologians, and the analogies of faith and reason, but even *absurd* in themselves.

Let us resume our study of the reasons for the true doctrine. Let us hear some of the words of the Fathers:

“As fire entering into a forest is accustomed to cleanse all things, so the fervor of charity, wheresoever it falls, there takes away and cuts out all sins. . . . Where there is charity, there have been taken away all evils.” (St. John Chrysostom, Hom. 7 on 2 Line, N. 3.)

“If any one has found fraternal charity in his heart, let him be secure, because he has passed from death to life; he is already on the right hand.” (St. Augustine on 1 John, N. 10.)

“Do you wish to be absolved? Love. Charity covereth a multitude of sins. What is worse than the crime of denial? And yet by mere love Peter was able to destroy it.” (St. Peter Chrysologus, Sermon 94.)

“What do we believe love to be, but fire, and what sin but rust? Whence it is now said: many sins are forgiven her because she loved much. As if it were openly said: she hath fully burned out the rust of sin because she is very fervent with the fire of love.” (St. Gregory the Great, 33rd Homily on the Gospels.)

“Let no one who loves lack confidence that he is loved.” (St. Bernard, Epistle 107. N. 8.)

Like the words of the Scriptures, the words of the Fathers are also indefinite and universal, and obviously exclude limitations of God's love and friendship to only such as have greater intensity or longer duration of love.

Let us now consider some of the decrees of the Church on this matter:

The Holy See repeatedly and most solemnly proscribed the following propositions of Baius:

31. "Charity perfect and sincere which is from a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned, can exist both in catechumens and in penitents without the remission of sins."

Since this proposition is false then its contradictory is true and thus according to the Holy See, such charity or love *can not* exist without the remission of sins, is *always* joined with the remission of sins.

32. "That charity which is the fullness of the law, is not always joined with the remission of sins."

Hence if love resolves to keep all the commandments, it is always joined with the remission of sins.

33. "A catechumen lives rightly, justly, and holily, and observes the Commandments of God and fulfils the law through charity *before* obtaining the remission of sins, which in the laver of Baptism is finally received."

Hence, the remission of sins *is* received before actual Baptism and that always when there is the charity here described.

70. "A man who is in the state of mortal sin or of condemnation to eternal damnation can have true charity, and charity even such as is perfect can co-exist with condemnation to eternal punishment."

Hence, a man who is in the state of mortal sin or of condemnation to eternal punishment *can not* then have true charity, that is, the substance of charity or intensely perfect charity, can not co-exist with condemnation to eternal damnation. Here it is the clear teaching of the Holy See that any one who has true love, the substance of love, is *always* freed from condemnation to eternal damnation.

71. "Through contrition even when joined with perfect charity and with the desire of receiving a Sacrament, there is no remission of crime outside of a case of necessity or of martyrdom without the actual reception of a sacrament."

This proposition is most rigid. It asserts that with no contrition, even *the most intense* or perfect, is sin ever remitted outside of the case of martyrdom or of necessity, without the actual reception of a sacrament. Kind reader, would you believe it? That most severe proposition of Baius on the efficacy of perfect contrition is often asserted by pious, practical Catholics of our day and country.

As the zealous pastor makes his rounds in the hospital wards or the sick-rooms of the homes of his people, or otherwise comes in close contact with souls, he often finds some who wear him and themselves out with too frequent confession. He tells them that their sins are certainly not mortal, that they are probably, or perhaps certainly, no sins at all, that the evil thoughts or desires which flash through their souls are not voluntary at all, that even if those alleged sins are mortal in God's sight, yet persons of such delicate consciences as theirs, make frequent acts of love or perfect contrition.

"My child," says the Father, "do you not know that you make true acts of love for God, true acts of sorrow from love for God?"

"Yes, Father." "Do you not know that as soon as you make such an act of love or contrition your mortal sins, if they exist, are always immediately blotted out?"

"No, Father. I did not know that they are then always blotted out. I thought that without the actual reception of a sacrament, with perfect contrition mortal sins are blotted out only sometimes, as for instance, at the hour of death when no priest can be had."

In how many souls there is this remnant of Jansenism, this most rigorous Jansenistic error with its soul-withering anguish. Since the days of Jansenism, Calvinism, and Lutheranism, there has come a great change in the tendency of minds on points like these. In our day, alas! with its false liberty or liberalism there is a widespread tendency to the glorification of pride and to independence of God Himself. As Pius X tells us, the crime of our age is apostasy from God. Then the anti-Catholic tendency was against the doctrine of the activity of our free will in its co-operation with the supernatural influence of God exerted by His interior actual graces, and thus was against the efficacy even of our love and perfect contrition. Now errors are created in the holy name of liberty; then they were oftener created in the holy name of humility. But the humility which denies the efficacy of charity is not humility but its mask.

Humility is knowledge by the mind and recognition by the will of the *truth* about our deficiencies under God. The virtue of magnanimity or orderly desire of our own excellence is

based on the recognition of the *truth* about our powers to be truly great and to do or suffer great things. Humility recognizes these powers as received from God and hinders us from glorying in them as if we had not received them.

The virtue of charity recognizes the *truth* about the goodness of God in Himself and about His lovingness toward us.

The virtue of prudence is right reason about things to be done here and now, and recognizes the *truth* about the proper practice of the virtues. If our natural love of our own excellence is compared to a spirited steed, then magnanimity is the whip, humility the bridle, prudence the rider to apply whip or rein according to times, places or other circumstances. Each virtue recognizes a special *truth*. No truth is or can be opposed to another truth. No virtue regulated in its exercise by prudence can be opposed to any other virtue regulated by prudence. In other words, right reason or *truth* can not be opposed to right reason or *truth*. There can not be any reason or *truth* in fancies opposed to the inspired words of Scripture and the infallible decrees of the Church, teaching us that God always immediately has the substance of love and friendship for those who have the substance of love and friendship toward Himself. And that Jansenistic humility based on falsehood was not humility, but its mask. May these strong words of ours serve to pull a sharp, deep thorn out of the bleeding heart of many a soul of delicate conscience, who has hitherto been the dupe of Jansenistic falsehood against the revealed truth about the merciful kindness of the plan of our good Father and Friend.

Let us resume the proofs drawn from the decrees of the Church. In Session 14, Chapter 4, the Council of Trent teaches that "although sometimes it happens that contrition is perfect by charity and reconciles man to God before this sacrament [of penance] is actually received." It is necessary here for the satisfaction of the minds of those who know Latin to cite the original text, of which the above is the accepted translation. "*Etsi contritionem aliquando caritate perfectam esse contingat hominemque Deo reconciliare priusquam hoc sacramentum actu suscipiatur.*"

Rigorists had wished to translate this text thus :

"Although it *sometimes* happens that contrition is perfect by



charity and that contrition perfect by charity *sometimes* (though not always), reconciles man to God before this sacrament is actually received."

If the Council of Trent had spoken thus clumsily and obscurely, its words would be easily interpreted and cleared up by the explicit solemn teaching of the Holy See in its condemnation of those five propositions of Baius. However, if the reader will only look at the text with his own eyes he will see that he can understand it for himself without the aid of any Roman infallible ex-cathedra oracle and merely with the aid of his own knowledge of parsing, of the rudiments of grammar.

Let him notice the position of the word "aliquando," "sometimes." Considering its position, what verb does this adverb of time modify? Of course, the verb "contingat," "happens." Can it be understood to modify the verb "reconciliare," "reconciles"? No, not if you consider its position. It is toward the head of the first clause of the sentence. It is not inserted near the head of the second clause, "reconciles man with God, etc." This objection is too trivial to spend much time on it. It is further seen to be futile if one considers the context of the passage. The decree has been cited in full before and we will not now load our pages with its repetition here.<sup>1</sup>

Let us now study the teaching of the catechism of the Council of Trent.

Under the title of the importance of confession it says:

"Contrition, it is true, blots out sin. But who is ignorant that to effect this it must be so intense, so ardent, so vehement, as to bear a proportion to the magnitude of the crimes which it effaces? This is a degree of contrition which few reach and hence, through perfect contrition alone, *very few indeed could hope to obtain the pardon of their sins.*"

In all candor, this last sentence squarely contradicts the main proposition of our book; namely, that acts of perfect love and perfect contrition are not so hard in practice as to be rare in fact, but are so easy as to be common among ordinary souls. That last sentence says, "through perfect contrition

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<sup>1</sup>For further discussion of this point, see Appendix III, page 560.

alone very few indeed could hope to obtain pardon for their sins."

Some years ago, the writer, who in his youth had studied Gury-Ballerini as his text-book of moral theology, noticing the already cited teaching of Gury and of St. Alphonsus that love for God above all things for His own sake is easy, and is also common among the faithful, conceived an ambition to uproot the contrary disheartening and pernicious error out of the minds of the many. And he began to take the pains to put together various authorities and reasons for the truth on this point. He had made some progress before his attention was fully fixed on that sentence of the catechism. When he finally realized the stand there taken he thought that in the circumstances the best thing for him to do was to put down his pen and lay his manuscripts up on the top shelf and give up his ambition to do this great thing for souls. "For," as he said to himself, "if I start out with the pledge to meet all objections squarely, I will be forced to meet this one, too, and nothing will be left for me to do but to say that this assertion of the catechism of the Council of Trent is false, and is to be flatly denied as false. I am certain that it is false. Moreover, I believe that this one phrase in the catechism has been a greater cause than all the tomes of Lutherans, Calvinists, and Jansenists in spreading this error among our Catholic priests and people. But who am I to be the first to come out in print and extract a proposition from the catechism and brand it as false and scandalous?"

St. Alphonsus, as we have seen, did apply these censures to the teaching that a special degree of intensity is required for contrition to be perfect and blot out the guilt of mortal sin. However, he did not explicitly notice and condemn this proposition of the catechism. Moreover, I am far from having the ability or authority which would have justified the Holy Doctor in thus talking out for truth and for the goodness of God and for the sanctification and salvation of souls.

"In text-books like those of Palmieri and Pesch, this passage of the catechism is noticed as a stock objection against the need of any special intensity for contrition to be perfect and blot out sin. But in these books I find only the first part of the passage noticed, only the sentence referring directly to

the degree of intensity. This was the only subject directly treated by them. They were not necessarily concerned with the last sentence, asserting that perfect contrition is had by very few. They were thus perhaps not called on to contradict this last assertion. But I am."

Such was the state of the writer's mind. And for a time his fond ambition seemed to be blasted. Afterward it was his good fortune to obtain a full set of the fifteen volumes of Cardinal Billot and to see in one of them the passage already quoted:

"We must remove that prejudice (which is a remnant of Jansenism) that the act of perfect love is a thing of great difficulty. That this is most false is most manifestly evident. For that act is contained within the limits of ordinary grace, as it exists within the limits of a precept which is imposed upon all persons and is even at the head of all precepts. Moreover, every rational creature by a natural inclination of his will, is inclined to loving God above all things, as has been above noted from St. Thomas P. 1. Q. 60. A. 5. And supposing our elevation to our supernatural end, this inclination is connaturally also to the love of friendship which is called charity. Indeed, it is true that in our state of fallen nature there are, arising from concupiscence, many things which draw us to the opposite and counteract that natural or supernatural inclination of our will. But it must also be considered that whatever is found difficult in the act of perfect love is already overcome through the purpose of renouncing sin, which purpose is included even in simple attrition. And thus, supposing a will averted from sin (which will is necessarily and always required for justification in whatsoever circumstances), and supposing the said impediment already removed, it is then most easy to ascend to a high heart by assuming the motive of love, than which nothing is more sweet, nothing more delightful, nay, through which all hard things become easy."

Here is a learned and brilliant professor of the great Gregorian University of Rome, recently honored with the cardinalate for the solidity and soundness of his doctrine, and he strenuously affirms that perfect contrition is most easy, and we rightly and easily conclude that he holds it to be also most common among ordinary souls.

Afterward we came across the booklet of Father von den Driesch, with its sanction by Lehmkuhl, Slater, Noldin, etc. It was written to show that perfect contrition is a golden key of heaven, that it was easy and common before the coming of Our Lord, and is much more easy and common since. It

thus was written to show that any one who says that perfect contrition ever was rare, says what is false. The catechism says that. Therefore, according to that booklet, it thus here says what is false.

It was only after we had written this chapter that Father Slater, S. J., in an article in the "Irish Ecclesiastical Record," of September, 1914, page 225, openly affirmed and proved that these words of the catechism are erroneous. He says:

" . . . according to this authoritative source of Catholic teaching, it is so difficult to make a perfect act of contrition, that few make it, and very few, indeed, could hope to obtain the pardon of their sins by perfect contrition alone. However great the authority of the catechism of the Council of Trent may be, it is well known that there are in it points of doctrine which have no greater weight than has a theological opinion. I may instance what the catechism says about the necessity of confessing the circumstances of sin, which only aggravate its malice, but do not change its nature. In the above extract another such point in which one theological opinion is followed without depriving Catholics of the liberty to follow other and more consoling opinions if they choose to do so? Yes, it is; unless I am mistaken.

"In proof of this contention I may observe, in the first place, that in the above extract the catechism seems to require more than the common teaching of Catholic schools requires. If the words be taken in their obvious sense they seem to require that an efficacious act of perfect contrition should be not only a detestation of sin above all other evils, but also that it should be in the highest degree intense. On the contrary, the common teaching nowadays is that no special degree of intensity is required in the act of contrition provided that it be a detestation of sin above all other evils for the love of God. Indeed, the catechism of the Council of Trent itself seems to teach the milder opinion in another place. There it says:

"If, however, our contrition be not perfect, it may nevertheless be true and efficacious; for as things which fall under the senses frequently touch the heart more sensibly than things purely spiritual, it will sometimes happen that persons feel more intense sorrow for the death of their children than for the grievousness of their sins."

"The presumed necessity of so great intensity, ardor, and vehemence is the reason why the catechism teaches that very few indeed could hope to obtain the pardon of their sins through perfect contrition alone."

In this, the text of the catechism contradicts numerous texts of the Scriptures, and the common teaching of the Holy Fathers and the Holy Doctors, among whom the Angel of the Schools is the most pronounced. It likewise contradicts

the common teaching of Catholic theologians, who in our day are unanimous and outspoken. As far as we have been able to learn, as we have said before, not one Catholic theologian, at least of any note, has contradicted this teaching within the last two hundred years.

Therefore, it is not rash for us with such authorities to cry out that that assertion is false even though it is manifestly contained in the catechism of the Council of Trent, for which no one has greater admiration, reverence and love than ourselves.

How do we directly answer the authors of the catechism? Let us consider their words: "Contrition, it is true, blots out sin. But who is ignorant that to effect this it must be so intense, so ardent, so vehement, as to bear a proportion to the magnitude of the crimes which it effaces?"

Let us bear in mind the substance of the doctrine of St. Thomas and St. Alphonsus as above exposed. Suppose two sinners, we will call one Peter and the other Paul. Each now has love for God above all things for His own sake in the same lowest degree required and sufficient for the existence of the essence of charity. Peter has been guilty of mortal sins, of theft and calumny. Paul has been guilty of these same sins, and also of murder. By the fact of having such love each will have hate and sorrow for each mortal sin as the greatest kind of evil, as the only evil which violates his love and friendship for God. Peter considers his calumny as a graver violation of love than his theft. Thence from his love for God he necessarily has a greater sorrow and detestation for the former crime. Paul considers his calumny as greater than his theft, and his murder as greater than his calumny, and his love will necessarily cause a proportionate detestation and sorrow. Here contrition is motived by that low degree of love, yet is so intense, so ardent, so vehement as to bear a proportion to the magnitude of mortal sin in general, and of the special crimes which it effaces. If Peter and Paul have that lowest degree of love, then where is the difficulty in also having contrition which bears a proportion to the magnitude of the crimes which it effaces? No difficulty exists.

In the chapter on the consensus of the theologians of our day, we have seen the catechism affirming and also proving from the Scripture and the Fathers, that love for God above

all things for His own sake is easy. Hence, we have seen the catechism contradicting there, what it says here. Moreover, there it not only *affirms* but solidly *proves*, here it offers *no proof* save the one just shown to be futile.

Does the catechism itself elsewhere teach the same doctrine about the nature and efficacy of perfect contrition as the Doctors and other theologians? Yes, and most beautifully:

“Other pious exercises, such as alms, fasting, prayer, and the like, in themselves holy and commendable, are sometimes, through human infirmity, rejected by Almighty God. But contrition can never be rejected by Him, can *never* prove unacceptable to Him. ‘A contrite and humbled heart, O God, Thou *wilt not* despise,’ exclaims the prophet. Nay more, the same prophet declares that *as soon as* we have conceived this contrition in our hearts, our sins are forgiven. ‘I said I will confess my injustices to the Lord, and Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin.’ Of this we have a figure in the ten lepers, who when sent by Our Lord to the priests, were cured of their leprosy, before they reached them. To show that such is the efficacy of true contrition of which we have spoken above, that through it we obtain from God the immediate remission of our sins.”

This is one of the best of commentaries on the above cited passage from the tridentine decree, whose force the rigorists sought to evade by cavilling subtleties and distinctions, which are not made and are even positively excluded by the obvious sense of the words of the Council, and of the texts of Scripture. Here remission is ascribed to any charity, not to intense charity.

Let us resume the words of the catechism:

“That for past transgressions the sinner should experience the deepest sorrow, a sorrow not to be exceeded, will easily appear from the following considerations: Perfect contrition is an act of charity emanating from what is called filial fear. The measure of contrition and charity should therefore, as is obvious, be the same. But the charity which we cherish toward God, is the most perfect love, and therefore, the sorrow which contrition inspires, should also be most perfect. God is to be loved above all things, and therefore, whatever separates us from God is to be hated above all things.

“It is also worthy of observation that to charity and contrition the language of Scripture assigns the same extent. Of charity it is said, ‘thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart.’ Of contrition: ‘be converted with thy whole heart.’ Besides, if it is true that of all objects which solicit our love, God is the supreme good, and no less true that of all objects which deserve our execra-

tion, sin is the supreme evil, the same principle which prompts us to confess that God is to be loved above all things, obliges us also of necessity to acknowledge that sin is to be hated above all things. That God is to be loved above all things so that we should be prepared to sacrifice our lives rather than offend Him, these words of the Redeemer declare: 'He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me.' 'He that will save his life, shall lose it.' As charity, observes St. Bernard, recognizes neither measure nor limit, or to use his own words, as 'the measure of loving God is to love Him without measure,' so the measure of hating sin should be to hate it without measure. *Besides*, our contrition *should* be supreme not only in degree but *also in intensity*, and thus perfect, excluding all *apathy* and *indifference* according to these words of Deuteronomy: 'When thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him, yet so thou seek Him with all thy heart, and all the affliction of thy soul' (iv. 29), and of the prophet Jeremias: 'Thou shalt seek Me and shalt find Me, when thou shalt seek Me with all thy heart and I will be found by thee, saith the Lord.' If, however, our contrition *be not perfect, it may nevertheless be true and efficacious*. For as things which fall under the senses frequently touch the heart more sensibly than things purely spiritual, it will sometimes happen that persons feel more intense sorrow for the death of their children than for the grievousness of their sins. Our contrition may also be true and efficacious though unaccompanied by tears. That sorrow for sins bathe the offender is much to be *desired and commended*. On this subject the words of St. Augustine are admirable: 'The spirit of Christian charity,' says he, 'lives not within you, if you lament the body from which the soul is departed, but lament not the soul from which God is departed.' To the same effect are the words of the Redeemer above cited: 'Woe to thee, Corozain, woe to thee, Bethsaida, for if in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in thee, they had long since done penance in sackcloth and ashes.' Of this, however, we have abundant illustrations in the well-known examples of the Ninevites, of David, of the woman taken in adultery, and of the Prince of the Apostles, all of whom obtained the pardon of their sins, imploring the mercy of God with abundance of tears."

In these elegant, beautiful, and sublime passages there is found nothing against the doctrine of St. Thomas and the Council of Trent that neither condemnation to eternal punishment nor the guilt of mortal sin can co-exist in the soul with the substance of charity or love for God above all things for His own sake.

Some may inquire, how could the catechism in that one objectionable passage have spoken with less precision than do the books of theology of our day, and how was it possible

for it even to make that one erroneous assertion? In reply, we might inquire, how was it possible for even great Homer sometimes to nod? How was it so easy for the ordinary navigator to sail to America after Columbus had discovered it? How is it that the Catholic child of to-day can speak more precisely of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception than could in their day St. Bernard or St. Thomas? How is it that every Catholic child can now speak more accurately about frequent and early communion than many a pious, learned, and prudent theological expert did before the utterances of Pius X? How is it, as Kern shows, that so many minor post-Reformation theologians yielded to their excessive zeal for certain Catholic truths and practices which had been defined by the Council of Trent, and to excessive antagonism against Protestant controversialists and denied part of the efficacy of the sacrament of Extreme Unction, and thus contradicted what had been taught by St. Thomas and the other great Doctors of his great age of theological enlightenment? In that erroneous sentence, the authors of the catechism who were probably different from the writers of the other passages, were apparently carried away by the heat of controversy against those who sought to overthrow the true and sanctifying doctrine on the utility and necessity of the sacrament of Penance.

Did the writers of the catechism have under their eye the teachings of the Holy See, condemning the propositions of Baius, from which condemnations the air was finally forever cleared and all easily know not only from the Scriptures, Fathers, theologians and Doctors, and especially from St. Thomas, but also from the living Church, that God always immediately gives His justifying, sanctifying grace to every one who makes an act of love for Him above all things for His own sake, and that the guilt of mortal sin or the condemnation to hell can never for a moment co-exist in a soul with an act of true charity, no matter how remiss?

We ask, did the authors of the catechism have under their eyes or within their reach these explicit oracles of the living infallible teacher from whom all Catholics can know the truth on this point with ease, certainty and security? The only reason which the writers of the catechism had or could have had



for asserting that perfect contrition is hard and rare after they had affirmed that perfect love is easy and common, was that for perfect contrition love perfect in kind is not sufficient, but besides love perfect by some further degree of intensity is required. This last assertion is plainly seen to have been condemned by the Holy See in the propositions of Baius. What, then, are the dates of the publication of the catechism and of the condemnation of those propositions? From the "Catholic Encyclopedia," and from the preface of the catechism the reader may see that the catechism first appeared in *September, 1566*. From the "Encyclopedia" he may also see that the very first condemnation of Baius was made by Pope St. Pius V *only in the year 1567*. Moreover these propositions had to be afterward repeatedly condemned by the Holy See. Some theologians were slow to grasp or accept the condemnations.

Which has the greater authority, the catechism or the dogmatic bulls of the Popes condemning those Baian propositions? Manifestly, the bulls of the Popes. That catechism is the most authoritative of all catechisms. It was ordered by the Council of Trent, and was afterward published with the authority and approval of Pope Pius V. It has since been approved by many other Popes. In the dogmatic bulls about the propositions of Baius, the Popes not only speak to the whole Church as its supreme teachers and use their apostolic authority, but use that authority in all its intensity. They do not use that authority in all its intensity in approving a whole volume of doctrines, like the catechism. Neither the Popes nor any theologian of the Church ever understood the whole catechism to be an *ex-cathedra*, infallible definition of things pertaining to faith or morals. All Popes and all theologians understand those dogmatic condemnations to be *ex-cathedra* and infallible.

But some reader may object to us, did not you yourself try to show from the teaching in the catechism that love for God is easy, that the same teaching must be and must have been the universal teaching of theologians and pastors? We did. But if the reader will look back at our words he will see that all we claim is that the presence of a teaching in the catechism causes us to reasonably *presume* that such has been

the teaching of theologians and pastors since its first publication. Presumption must always yield to truth. It is true and a fact under our eyes that theologians unanimously and explicitly contradict that sentence of the catechism, asserting that perfect contrition to be efficacious and blot out sin must have some special degree of intensity.

Catholic theologians are not known or seen to contradict the teaching of the catechism that love for God above all things for His own sake is easy. Hence, from the presence in the catechism of the teaching that love is easy, we rightly presume that such is the teaching of Catholic theologians and pastors.

Let us consider another sentence from the above cited passage of the catechism:

"If, however, our contrition be not perfect, it may nevertheless be true and efficacious. For as things which fall under the senses frequently touch the heart more sensibly than things purely spiritual, it will sometimes happen that persons feel more intense sorrow for the death of their children than for the grievousness of their sins."

This sentence is not to be blamed. It is even above all praise. However, its truth may be better appreciated through explanations and examples:

A little girl's canary bird died. A mother lost her babe. They both thought they had committed some mortal sin and complained to the confessor that they had cried a whole day for the loss of the bird and babe, respectively, and that they had not cried for the loss of God by their mortal sin. And they said that they could not have hated sin above all other evils or been more sorry for it than for the loss of bird or babe.

"Well," said the priest, "would you be willing to commit that mortal sin again if by it you hoped to bring back your bird or babe?"

Each burst out into the question: "How could I think of coolly doing that wrong, horrid thing against Our Divine Lord?"

Here clearly God was loved above all things, and the evil of sin was practically appreciated above the other evil, and yet was not so sensibly felt.

A matron, who was the mother of twelve children, complained to her confessor that for months she had felt no sweetness in thinking of God or Our Lord or the Blessed Mother, and asked what other cause there could be of this, but lack of love for those august and amiable personages.

"Have you begun to suffer from dyspepsia lately?" asked the holy sage. "Yes, but what has that got to do with it?"

"Everything, in your case," was the reply, "and do not fancy that God is displeased with you because you are feeble and your feelings are those of a dyspeptic."

A youth had begun to be devout and asked his confessor how it was that some days he could say his act of love so gladly and that other days he did not feel it at all?

"How is it," asked the confessor, "that the skating-pond down there is sometimes placid, at other times agitated and again at others frozen?"

"I suppose it depends on whether the wind is still or is blowing from the south or the north."

"Then remember, that the Spirit breathes where It wills, and whence it comes or whither it goeth no man knoweth, and that your moods and feelings may ever depend on the weather. God gives his actual graces of holy lights and impulses at the time and in the way that please His wisdom and goodness. He often gives more of the milk of sweetness to beginners who are like babes and need it more, and He often gives bitter trials of soul as His own bread to the stronger. He sees that some of His soldiers would flinch without regular pay or bounties, and that He can count on others to manfully persevere in His cause and to wait for their fuller pay at the end of the warfare on earth. He will clear up the mystery of the reasons of His ways of wisdom and goodness on the day of the last judgment."

"How is it," asked the same youth, "that I am never affected by the meditation on death?"

"In your case, the cause is that you have not made that meditation. Go back and make it seriously, and then tell me whether you have been affected."

"I have gone through all the exercises of the retreat and have experienced neither consolation nor desolation."

"You have not gone through these exercises of memory,

understanding, and will. Possibly you did not even memorize the points, and were like the man who got up hungry from the table because no food had been placed on it for him to masticate and assimilate. The memory places the food of truth before the mind, which understands and realizes it, and presents it to the will, which is moved by its realization. When we thus help ourselves to have holy thoughts and desires God regularly adds His help of graces, and the soul experiences consolations."

The newspapers tell of a company of tragedians acting before an audience of convicts who were more easily moved to emotions of pity or terror than others who were not hardened criminals. Let us suppose that each one of those convicts remained impenitent. It was still possible for him to be more emotional than a man of long habits of virtue.

A preacher of a charity sermon drew a vivid word picture of the misery and need of a multitude after a dire disaster. One hearer was moved to tears and sobs, but put only one cent out of her fat purse into the collection-plate. Another appeared stolid and yet emptied his purse for the aid of the sufferers. Tears, sobs, etc., are not always a sure measure of intensity of the will. They may exist with no intensity of the will, and intensity in the will may exist without them. They depend largely on temperament or nerves. Those whose nerves are weaker are usually more demonstrative and effusive and of weaker wills.

The adjective "sensible" applied to love, hate, sadness, devotion, etc., appears to have two meanings. It may mean such as affects the physical organs, or it may mean merely such as is directly perceptible by consciousness. In the second meaning it is taken in the same way, as when we say there is no sensible difference between two things or ideas. That is, there is no difference which is readily or easily perceived. When an emotion in the will is strong it is more easily perceived clearly and distinctly by our direct consciousness, and usually it also betrays itself by some effect on our looks, etc. Thus Pope Pius VII sending the great diplomat, Cardinal Consalvi, from Rome to Paris, to cope with Napoleon I and his court, remarked that he who would deceive that envoy should take care not to think in his presence.

What are the psychological *causes* disposing the soul to greater intensity of love for God? Where there is more vigor in the root of faith, and in the blossom of hope, there the fruit of love is greater. Such greater vigor is most desirable but without it there may be a sufficiency of faith and hope for the substance of love.

What are the psychological *effects* of greater intensity of love for God? The first is in willing the things that please God, in keeping His commandments, in heeding His counsels or special invitations, and in the loving practice of the virtues as occasions offer or demand. Each one of these effects follows necessarily from greater love for God one in nature, or from greater love for the Father or the Son or the Holy Ghost. It is more manifest that they necessarily follow from greater love for Our Divine Lord, Jesus Christ. We know more about Him and His commands and counsels and virtues and lovingness.

As has often been said before, love is thus objectively more intense, as it resolves to keep the commandments so as to avoid mortal sin against them, or so as to avoid venial sin against them, or as it resolves to heed all known divine counsels or invitations.

Let us take three pairs of men, A and B, C and D, E and F. The first pair, as we suppose, are resolved to keep the commandments only so far as to avoid mortal sin; the second so far only as to avoid venial sin; and the third so far as to avoid imperfection or the less perfect course of action, the course less pleasing to God. But with reference to the same object willed, there may be more alacrity of will in A than in B, in C than in D, and in E than in F. A' and B are like two arrows that aim at and hit the same target, and yet the arrow A may be swifter than the arrow B. Again, each may be like travelers by the same road to the same terminus, and yet A may only walk to it, and B may run to it. Changing things that should be changed, we may realize that also C and D and E and F are respectively peers of each other, and yet that C and E may each be first among peers.

In general as to spiritual things, those who run fast, more safely surmount the stumbling-blocks in the way than those who walk slowly on the same road. There is truth in the

saying, "He who goes slow goes safe, and he who goes safe goes far." This refers to steps of the body. In general, the opposite is true in reference to steps of the will by love. Thus those who received the two and the five talents of actual graces were good and faithful servants, and unlike the wicked and slothful receiver of the one talent who went and hid it in the earth.

He who from love for God aims at avoiding venial sin, and much more he who aims at avoiding the less perfect for the more perfect course, naturally has not only more alacrity but also more *stability* in avoiding mortal sin from love. Love begets more stability than shame for turpitude of sins. But as in love so also in its stability there are degrees. The greater the love for God and heaven and the virtues, the less our love for worldly things, the less in us the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes, the pride of life. The greater the charity, the less the cupidity. The greater the conversion of a heart to God, the less the disorderly conversion of that same heart to creatures. But in all these things there are many degrees.

With this outline before our eyes of the various degrees of objective or subjective intensity of love in the will, it becomes more manifest to us that we may have the essential or substantial or absolutely necessary degree of intensity of love, even though we have not the higher and more desirable. Writers and preachers do well to exhort and urge their readers and hearers to the higher degrees. But they do ill to so declaim against those who have not the higher as to leave them under the false impression that without them there can not be the substance of love.

One of the effects of charity or love for God is *joy*. "The charity of God has been poured in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." (Rom. v. 5.) But joy is caused in us from the Holy Spirit; according to Rom. xiv. 17. "The Kingdom of God is not food and drink but justice and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." Therefore charity is the cause of joy. Conclusion: Spiritual joy which is had about God is born from the love of charity.

From love proceed both joy and sadness, but in opposite ways. Joy is caused from love either on account of the

presence of the good loved, or also on account of this, that the good proper to the good loved, is in it and is preserved in it.

This second most specially pertains to the love of benevolence by which one rejoices at his friend prospering, even though he be absent. On the contrary, there follows from love sadness on account of the absence of the beloved, or because the beloved to whom we wish good is deprived of his good, or is depressed by some ill. Charity is love for God whose good is immutable, since He is His own goodness, and from the fact that He is loved He is in the lover by His most noble effect, according to I John, iv. 16. "He who abides in charity, abides in God and God in him." "Thus spiritual joy about God is caused from charity." (St. Thomas 2. 2. Q. 28. A. 1.)

This joy or sadness being caused by love for God varies in intensity in proportion to the intensity of love. Thus love which resolves to avoid venial sin or imperfection causes greater joy than love which merely resolves to avoid mortal sin. Some writers and preachers create the impression that we can not have the substance of spiritual joy unless we are resolved to be generous enough to God to avoid venial sin and even imperfection. This impression can be true only in the Baian supposition that no sin is by its nature venial and that every sin by its nature merits here separation from God's grace and love, and hereafter eternal punishment.

Another effect of love is peace. "Much peace to those loving Thy law." (Ps. cviii. 165.) Conclusion: "Peace is the proper effect of charity, as the love of charity extends to God and neighbor." (2. 2. Q. 30. A. 3.)

The Angelic Doctor explains that by love for God we will the will of God as of a friend or second self, and similarly the will of our neighbor as a friend or second self. He cites the saying of Cicero: "To will and to not will the same, this indeed is firm friendship." Love for God above all things for His own sake, and for our neighbor as ourself for God's sake, produces not only concord but union of peace toward God and neighbor, and spontaneously causes tranquillity of order in all our desires, and such a tranquillity as could not be so spontaneous or so quiet or restful if it were from more outward

causes, such as fear or hope. Thus it is the proper effect of love for God to quell pride, covetness, lust, wrath, gluttony, envy, and sloth, and to quell them more effectually than any other motive could possibly do. This peace or rest of soul or tranquillity of order in the soul has degrees varying in proportion to the intensity of love. Although we may not have the degree corresponding to a high degree of intensity, we may have a low degree sufficient for the substance or essence of charity, and hold our pride, covetousness, etc., so far checked and subdued that they do not overpower us to commit mortal sin.

“Learn from Me for I am meek and humble at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Does it not follow from these words of Our Lord that peace or rest of soul is the proper effect or fruit of meekness and humility, and that it is not special to charity or love? Meekness and humility quell anger and pride, their opposites. Charity quells not only anger and pride but also sensuality. Thus it quells not only all the evil desires or passions which are rooted in pride, but also those which are rooted in sensuality, and thus quells absolutely all. Besides, the most perfect meekness and humility are had only when they are motivated by charity, love for God or Our Lord. Is it not most likely that Our Lord here ascribed rest of soul to such meekness and humility learned from Him?

Another effect of love is communication of secret plans, desires, thoughts. Friends love to know each other and to be known by each other. Those who love God love to open their hearts to Him, to speak to Him, and tell Him what they think and feel about Him and themselves, and get His aid. Of course, they know that God is always lovingly looking into every recess of their souls, and does not need to be told their secrets in order to learn them. On the other hand, God loves to communicate His own most precious secrets to His friends.

“Now I will not call you servants because the servant knoweth not what his Lord doth. But I have called you friends because all things which I have heard from my Father, I have made known to you.” (John xv. 15.)

How many degrees there are in such union by which we



are one spirit with God. "He who clings to the Lord is one spirit." (1 Cor. vi. 17.) According to our degree of love for God, we have more love for conversation with Him as the object of our love, and our soul is even more where He is than where it animates our bodies.

Also, what a difference between most of us and St. Paul who said, "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me." (Gal. ii. 20.)

Each one who has the substance of love and friendship for God has also, as we have seen, the substance of peace or tranquillity of order in his desires, and the noise and tumult of the passions springing from pride and sensuality do not entirely hinder him from hearing the voice of God speaking to his soul, do not entirely darken his mind to the divine lights, do not entirely harden his heart to the divine impulses or inspirations. Thus each one who has the substance of love does know many of the secrets of His Divine Friend. His not having the supereminent knowledge of Jesus Christ, which St. Paul had, and in comparison with which he held all things as filth, shows that he has not the great love which St. Paul had. But it does not show that he has not the substance of love for Jesus Christ.

Scoffers often dogmatize against faith and piety as if they could not exist without folly. But the case is not rare of a great financier who, knowing that a transaction is within the law and being perplexed whether it be honest or fair, received great lights on this matter of conscience from his more pious wife or mother. Theologians have learned much about deductions from the truths of faith or about applications of the principles of morality, or about the snares and deceits of the world, from unlettered but deeply pious old women dwelling in the basement or garret of a tenement. The greatest practical lights on religion or morals come to the head from the heart. Even the lowest degree of true love for God inspires practical love for each one of the virtues, and thus begets much of the wisdom and prudence of the clean of heart who see God and the things of God.

We see another psychological effect of love for God from the following passage of Cardinal Gotti, which is found on the first page of his admirable treatise on charity.

"Friends must be certain of mutual love, and this is effected by charity. In the first place, our hidden and interior love is known to God. Then it is not hidden from men that they in their turn are loved by God for they know that God loves those who love Him. Though they can not know for certain that they love Him, yet they can sufficiently gather it from conjectures and signs. When one man is a friend to another, he can not know the love of the other with greater certainty than that gathered from signs and effects."

On this, the doctrine of the Jesuit Cardinal Bellarmine is the same as that of the Dominican Cardinal Gotti. The Lutherans had taught that no one is justified and in the state of grace unless he knows by faith, by the authority of God revealing to him individually and explicitly, that the merits of Christ have been imputed to him individually and personally and have covered over his sins from the divine sight. This absurdity had been anathematized by the Council of Trent, and denied and refuted by Bellarmine. Kemnitz objected: Catholics denying the absolute certainty from faith that we are justified, have no alternative but anxiety and anguish, from their ignorance, whether they are worthy of God's love or hatred. Bellarmine said they have another alternative, and because they are unwilling to leap into that Lutheran ditch on one side of the road, they need not be fools and leap into the ditch of anxiety on the other, but can wisely keep to the road between the two ditches. According to him the way in the middle is a high degree of probability (or what is called moral certainty in the broad sense) that we are in the state of grace. This moral certainty, he said, can be had from our good deeds done from love for God. We can easily be morally certain that we do good deeds from this motive of love, and we are absolutely certain by faith that God loves those who thus love Him. We thus know not only others, but also ourselves, as we know whether a tree is good; namely, from its fruits. And thus we do not need to hold that God makes frequent special revelations that we are in His grace. Without such revelations we can be practically certain that we love Him and are in the state of grace, and shun that foolish anxiety.

As we love to recall with St. Alphonsus, even if we are not willing to positively recognize that we have done good

deeds from the motive of love, yet if we recognize and confide that for a considerable period (say a month) we have not committed a mortal sin, then, according to that Holy Doctor, we ought to confide that in that period we have at least once actually loved God above all things for His own sake, and that we are God's friends, and He is our Friend.

This test of St. Alphonsus goes a step further than that of Bellarmine and is the more consoling. Such confidence is naturally proportionate to our resolution to avoid sin. It is reasonably greater as we are resolved to avoid not only mortal sin, but also venial sin, and is reasonably greatest when we are resolved to avoid even imperfection. It is also greater according to our greater subjectively intense will to avoid these respective objects.

This confidence is almost identical with the joy and peace of which we have spoken. At least it is a great element in their composition.

Finally, we remind the reader that if we can not have the highest degree of sweetness of confidence that we love God and that He loves us, and that we are His, yet it is most easy to have a lower degree, especially if there is any solidity in the teaching of St. Alphonsus.

Pope Clement VIII, when making Bellarmine a cardinal, declared that one of his reasons was that Bellarmine then had not his equal in the Church in ecclesiastical learning. After Bellarmine's death, Cardinal Baronius of the Oratory of St. Philip, the second father of ecclesiastical history, as Eusebius was the first, declared that Bellarmine's treatise on the Church was in his judgment the greatest written for a thousand years. He was honored by Oxford and other anti-Catholic universities, which founded special chairs for the refutation of Bellarmine. He regards love for God as so manifestly easy and common that each soul ought to be able to be morally certain that he has it.

We beg the reader to reflect on the affirmation of Cardinal Gotti that charity or love of friendship for God does not *exist* unless there is mutual knowledge of mutual love. This is not a singular opinion of his but the common and accepted teaching of the Catholic theologians who mention this subject. Thus, Ballerini-Palmieri, Vol. 2, N. 136:

"For friendship there is required love which is mutual . . . and not hidden. In fact it is not the practice to call those persons friends who do not know the love of each other. Moreover, it is special to friendship that it be lasting and even perpetual. But love can not be lasting without being mutual. Without such mutual love [mutually known], love easily grows cold."

With these data before us, we see that he who grants that the love of friendship for God is easy for us, must necessarily grant that it is easy for us to know that God loves us as friends, and that he who grants that it is easy for us to *know* that we love God as His friends, must necessarily grant that it is easy to love God.

One of the stock objections against the truth of the present proposition was taken from the text of St. Luke, vii, 37-48:

"And behold a woman who was in the city, a sinner, when she knew that He sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment. And standing behind at His feet, she began to wash His feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head and kissed His feet and anointed them with the ointment. And the Pharisee, who had invited Him, seeing it, spoke within himself, saying: This man, if He were a prophet, would know surely who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him, that she is a sinner. And Jesus answering, said to him: Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee. But he said: Master, say it. A certain creditor had two debtors, the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And whereas they had not wherewith to pay, he forgave them both. Which therefore of the two loveth him most? Simon answering, said: I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And He said to him: Thou hast judged rightly. And turning to the woman, He said unto Simon: Dost thou see this woman? I entered into thy house; thou gavest Me no water for My feet; but she with tears hath washed My feet, and with her hairs hath wiped them. Thou gavest Me no kiss; but she, since she came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but she with ointment hath anointed My feet. Wherefore I say to thee: Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much. But to whom less is forgiven, he loveth less. And He said to her: Thy sins are forgiven thee."

The objection is grounded in the first place on the words, "*loved much.*" The rigorists argued: "In the case of Magdalen the cause of many sins being forgiven was much love. But here much love means intense love, and not love which is predominating or supreme in kind and yet remiss in degree.

Therefore, in every case the necessary cause of forgiveness is intense love, such as Magdalen had."

From the context as it appears to us, we should grant that Magdalen had not only imperfect but also perfect love, not only attrition but contrition, and love and contrition perfect not only in species but also in a great degree of intensity. However, in the context we note the case of another debtor, another sinner, who sinned less and owed less and was forgiven less, and loved less and yet had his sins forgiven. From this text alone it is manifest that intense love is not the necessary cause of forgiveness in *every* case.

Was the intense love of Magdalen a necessary cause of forgiveness of guilt of mortal sins, and the remission of the eternal punishment due to them? This is not said or implied in the text. Peter says to Paul: "I love you most intensely." And Paul responds: "I know and see your intense love for me, and it is the cause of my forgiving your great injuries to me, and loving you as a friend." Paul does not say or imply by this statement of fact that his forgiveness and love would not have been caused by love true though less intense, that intense love was a necessary cause.

The Fathers and Doctors observe that in Magdalen's case also the temporal punishments due to her sins were remitted on account of her most intense love. According to this, there might have been logically and truly affirmed in the conclusion of the above syllogism: therefore, the necessary cause of forgiveness such as Magdalen received, is intense love such as she had. It is illogical to affirm the conclusion: therefore, the necessary cause of forgiveness less than Magdalen received is the intense love such as she had.

Suppose that a person from love is resolved to avoid mortal sin, but not venial sin, and that he has not hearty sorrow for his past venial sins. The guilt of the venial sins is not remitted and much less is the temporal punishment due to them remitted. Suppose that from love he has sorrow and detestation and resolve with regard to all mortal and venial sins, but that his love is not intense but remiss and is in the lowest degree required and sufficient for true love or charity. It is not so sure that all his temporal punishments are remitted. With the much love which Magdalen is believed to have had,

a soul is absolutely undefiled and ready to enter heaven without passing through the purifying flames of purgatory. But without this much love, a soul may still be made ready to receive God's grace and to be freed from condemnation to the eternal punishments of hell.

Baius founded an objection, on Our Lord's use of the present tense in verses 47 and 48, "*are forgiven,*" *i.e.*, are forgiven *now only*, and were not forgiven *before* Our Lord pronounced those words, although before, there was the much love in the heart of her who had sinned much. He concluded that even intense love can exist in a soul without its being forgiven its mortal sins and its eternal punishments. The objection has no foundation. In the first place, the declaration that sins are now forgiven does not logically imply that they had not been forgiven before that moment. In the second place, the original Greek text of St. Luke uses not the present form but a past tense.

Have there not ever been Catholic theologians who required for justification special intensity or duration in contrition perfected by charity? Yes, we read the following passage in N. 27. C. 10. B. 12 of the "History of the Council of Trent," by Pallavicino :

"There had also been prepared a canon condemning 'whoever shall deny that contrition by which the penitent co-operating with divine grace through Jesus Christ repents of his sins for God with the purpose of confessing and satisfying, remits sin.' But Balthasar Eredia, Archbishop of Cagliari, remonstrated that that was the teaching of Cajetan and Adrian and thence it ought not to be condemned."

It was the policy of the Council to censure by its anathemas only errors of heretics and not all the mistakes of loyal sons of the Church. However, this incident manifests that this teaching of Cajetan and Adrian was regarded by the Council as peculiar and contrary to the common teaching of theologians even before the Council of Trent.

Bellarmino on Penance, B. 11. C. 13, says that it is calumny on the part of Kemnitz to ascribe this rigorous teaching to Catholic theologians, and that the calumny was an invention and device of Kemnitz to misrepresent as obscure and tangled the Catholic doctrine, which is clear and simple.

After Bellarmine's time there were a few other Catholic theologians who advocated this rigorism. However, their number or repute for saneness was never great.

This record of facts helps to understand how the authors of the catechism could have made the above discussed slip.

What degree of duration was required by those singular authors? They seemed not to know their own minds. All Catholic theologians recognize and readily grant that some space of time is required for making an act of love for God above all things. But they deny that there is a moment's delay on the part of God in infusing justifying and sanctifying grace, once the act of love is made.

What are the degrees of intensity required by those authors? Some said that for justification one must elicit the most intense love possible for us with the actual graces then and there given us individually by God. It is gratuitous to assert that God has commanded such an effort of our will or that He requires it for justification. Moreover, how is it possible for us to know the degree of interior graces given us? It is always utterly impossible to know it. Thence it is impossible for us to know what God commands and requires us to do. And it is perhaps more manifestly impossible for us to know whether we have made that greatest effort possible. Almighty God could not be the author of any such absurd and cruel command or requirement.

Other rigorists did not require such absolute intensity and yet maintained that each one's sadness for sin should be more intense than his sadness for anything else. We have already explained how love for God must be above all things; how it is enough for us to consider all things in general, and it is not necessary to consider each created good or evil in particular; and how feelings are only accidental and not essential in the love of charity or friendship toward God; and how things known by the senses act more strongly on our sensible affections than the invisible things of God which are perceived by the pure intelligence; and how it is not at all times in our power to arouse such or such a feeling in ourselves, or to arouse it in such or such a degree of intensity; and how we can not always accurately judge whether we have love in our will, and much less can we measure its intensity.

Moreover, we must ever remember that those rigorists wish to make out God as one whose burden is heavy, whose yoke is galling, and whose commands are hard and even impossible. We know He is not thus, and by this knowledge are certain He did not make that requirement.

But let us look at their theory in itself. It seems to be about this way. Mary, a mother, has lost a child and has intense sadness, let us say, in the degree of ten. The day before the death of the child, she committed a mortal sin, and had from love for God intense sadness in the degree of nine, and that was then enough and she received justifying grace. After the death of the child she commits a mortal sin, and has contrition in the same degree of nine, which she had the day before, and yet this degree of nine which was enough then is not enough now. Moreover, here is Martha, who has not lost her child, but has committed mortal sin, and for her, contrition in the degree of nine is enough for justification.

Is it not absurd to say that God forgives Martha and does not forgive Mary, who has the same degree of contrition for the same sin, or that He forgave Mary yesterday for the same sin with the same contrition, and will not do so today? Yes.

Thus this citadel of the Jansenists vanishes like mist before the light of common sense.



## CHAPTER XVII

### *THE ACT OF LOVE REQUIRED BY OUR GOOD GOD AS THE NECESSARY MEANS OF JUSTIFICATION AND SALVATION*

**T**HIS chapter refers not to infants, but to those who have attained the use of reason.

Since the institution of the Christian sacraments it is possible to be justified and saved with attrition. Before, contrition or perfect love was required; and, since their institution immense multitudes, the vast majority of the human race, live and die without the actual reception of any Christian sacrament, and none of these who has attained the use of reason is ever justified and saved without an act of love or perfect contrition. God, the Father, created each soul to be justified and saved, and wishes this most seriously. God, the Son, died that each might be justified and saved. For this same end God, the Holy Ghost, gives abundant interior graces to each individual soul. An act of love is the only plank provided by them for the safety of that vast majority of souls from the shipwreck of original or mortal sin; this is the only ark to save them from that deluge. Again and again, we ask, can this plank be so slippery that it is grasped and held by only a few? Can this ark be so hard to enter? To be saved, this is the yoke—the burden, that they must take up and bear. Is it galling and heavy except for a few? This is the only path provided by the Father of those many prodigals to return to His home and embrace. Is this path such that it is very hard to tread?

The Good Shepherd gave His life for each one of these many stray sheep. How he yearns for their return to His fold! How He rejoices at the return of even one! Yet this is the only way provided by Him for their return. Is it so hard as to be rarely traveled?

Our Lord is the Good Samaritan. Each one of those souls is the traveler who wandered down toward Jericho from Jerusalem, and on that downward path was stripped and

wounded and left half dead. Love is the only oil and wine for healing their wounds and saving their life. Is this necessary balm so hard to be had that only a few obtain it and are healed by it?

Father von den Driesch bases his whole booklet on this argument alone. It certainly has great force. He states it very briefly. We will state it more fully.

It has been already touched upon in our chapter on the precious quality and abundant quantity of God's interior graces. Do we say or imply that these graces, being necessities for eliciting justifying love and for obtaining salvation, are exigencies of our nature, and that we have a right to them from the fact that we have been created? No; but, as is true and manifest, God creates each soul in the supernatural order; as a fact, creates each *not in* but yet *for* these supernatural graces, and for this supernatural salvation merited by Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of each. God ardently desires that the Precious Blood of His Son shed for this end shall not be wasted. The interior graces given to each soul are most abundant, and are merited in abundance, not by our nature, but by the Divine Redeemer, about whom the Father said: "This is My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." He earnestly desires that each one may have life and have it abundantly, that each one may be saved, and this desire includes the other desire to give to each graces of precious quality and abundant quantity.

We will first consider the question: When and for whom is *attrition* sufficient for justification? The Council of Trent, in Session 14, Chapter 4, tells us that:

" . . . although this attrition *can not* of itself, without the sacrament of Penance, conduct the sinner to justification, yet does it dispose him to obtain the grace of God in the sacrament of Penance."

The words "dispose him" here mean: "dispose him sufficiently and proximately."

St. Alphonsus (Book 6, N. 440) says against a few rigorists:

"It is the certain and common teaching of the doctors that perfect contrition is not required, but that attrition is sufficient."

It is likewise the certain and common teaching that attrition is a sufficient disposition for receiving the effects of the sacrament of Baptism and Extreme Unction. The reason for this sufficiency in the sacrament of Penance is comprehensive and necessarily applies also to the sacrament of Baptism or of Extreme Unction. If the sick man was conscious of being in the state of mortal sin, if he could possibly have done so he should have confessed and received absolution before being anointed. However, "if" at the moment of anointing, the sick man "be in sin, his sin shall be forgiven." For this effect attrition is a sufficient disposition. With contrition he would not *be in sin*.

Baptism and Penance are primarily sacraments of the dead. They were instituted by Our Lord primarily to give the life of grace to those who are dead, who are in the death of original sin alone, or of both original and actual mortal sin, or of actual mortal sin alone. They were instituted to give the first grace. Extreme Unction was, according to St. James, instituted to remit sin, and sin in the proper sense, mortal sin. But it was instituted for this end only secondarily, and not primarily, only *if* he be in sin. The other sacraments are Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. Each of these is a sacrament of the living and not of the dead. He who approaches any one of them is required and expected to be in the state of grace, of supernatural life. Confirmation confirms, strengthens, gives grace to be perfect Christians, perfect soldiers of Christ. The Eucharist, under the form of bread and wine, feeds the soul, gladdens the heart. Holy Orders confers the graces to worthily exercise powers over the real and the mystic body of Christ. Matrimony confers graces by which husband and wife image the sublime union of love and obedience between Christ and His Church. Each of these special sacramental graces is for a subject who is not dead but alive.

However, at the very beginning of the treatise on the sacraments, one of the first questions which is asked is, whether sacraments of the living ever confer the first grace, habitual grace which justifies, gives life to the soul which was dead in mortal sin. Suppose that some one is conscious of having committed a mortal sin, and that he has not confessed it and

been absolved from it. Before approaching the sacrament of Confirmation, Holy Orders, or Matrimony, he is obliged to be in the state of grace. However, he is not obliged by any law of God or of the universal Church to confess and to receive absolution, to use *this* means of justification. He might make an act of perfect contrition and thus become justified and worthy to receive a sacrament of the living. If he has a proper respect for those holy rites and some good sense, he *will* prepare himself by first receiving the sacrament of Penance. But he is not obliged by any universal strict law to then use this means of justification. The Blessed Eucharist is the holiest of all the sacraments, and, before receiving it, he is strictly obliged after mortal sin to probe or prove himself by the sacrament of Penance and thus ensure his worthiness to eat of the Bread of the Angels.

But suppose that some one actually approaches some one of these sacraments, and is in the state of mortal sin but is in good faith, and is attrite though not contrite. The case may easily happen. Thus on Saturday evening John, who has committed mortal sin, confesses sincerely all the mortal sins of which he is then conscious and receives absolution from them. He recites his act of contrition before receiving absolution, but, as a fact, has not then said this act in his heart, has not had hearty sorrow and detestation for the mortal sins committed, with the firm purpose of not committing any mortal sin in the future. His sins were not forgiven by the absolution of the priest. As we suppose, he believed that he had made a serious act at least of attrition. Now the following morning our friend John says his prayers better and makes a true act of attrition, but not of contrition, and receives one of the sacraments of the living. Note that he is in the state of mortal sin, but that he is attrite and only attrite, and that he is in good faith, thinks that he has made the proper preparation and that he has the dispositions required for receiving the sacrament of the living worthily and validly. We do not ask whether he commits a new sin, a sacrilege. One who does not advert to his unworthiness can not intend to unworthily receive and can not possibly commit a new sin, a sacrilege, or thus eat and drink damnation to himself. Our question is whether a sacrament of the living then confers the grace which destroys

mortal sin, blots out its guilt and its debt of eternal punishment. There have been many grave theologians who say no. There have been many more, and much graver ones, who say yes. There have been others who say *no* for the Eucharist, which sacrament can be received again, and *yes* for Confirmation, Holy Orders, or Matrimony. According to Schouppe (Dogmatic Theology V. 2, N. 162) the first class saying that mortal sin is not forgiven by the efficacy of any sacrament of the living, and the third class saying that it is not forgiven by the efficacy of the sacrament of the Eucharist, yet believe that, as a fact, the sacraments of the living in that case produce their proper effect. How so? In their opinion such a subject makes an act of perfect contrition, Almighty God having poured into his heart special actual graces for that special situation, and he is thus previously justified and the sacrament of the living produces its special effects in his soul. If these theologians are rigorous on this special point, they are with us on our general thesis that acts of perfect contrition are not hard and rare, but easy and common.

Has the Church defined anything on this special point? No. Which one of these opinions is the more probable? That which says that any sacrament of the living confers the first grace on him who is attrite and in good faith. As has been said, it has for it the greater number of theologians. Moreover, these theologians are greater not only in their number, but in the weight of their authority. It has for it Suarez, called by the great Benedict XIV the "Doctor Eximius." Above all, it has for it St. Thomas and St. Alphonsus. The other side has for it no authors so highly approved by the authority of the Church. Finally, it has for it many Holy Fathers. The reader who so desires may see the texts cited from them by De Augustinis.

Billot, who in this is cited and followed by Hurter, is one of the most strenuous champions of this time-honored and widespread doctrine. According to him, the immediate effect produced by a sacrament is not habitual grace, but a character, or title, or right calling for habitual grace and inducing the infusion of grace if there is no obstacle to it. Sometimes a sacrament is received validly, and yet sanctifying grace is not received. Thus, Baptism received by one who is not attrite;

thus, also Confirmation, Holy Orders, Matrimony, received by one who is not attrite, are yet validly received, and with them there is received a right or title to receive their effects when the obstacle to these has been removed. It is the universal rule that the sacraments produce the effects which they signify. The signification and virtue of the sacraments extend to the effect of habitual grace, not proximately and absolutely, but only mediately and hypothetically; mediately, that is, through the medium of the title which calls for grace; hypothetically, *if* there is no obstacle by which the exigency of the title is impeded. As the Council of Trent teaches, each one of the sacraments produces habitual grace in him who opposes no obstacle. Now he who is attrite and in good faith opposes no obstacle. Lugo and others have affirmed that he who is in mortal sin, though attrite and in good faith, does oppose an obstacle to receiving grace through a sacrament of the living. The question here is whether Our Lord willed that sacraments of the living confer grace on the attrite who are in good faith. Some of us may not accept explanations *how* this happens, and yet logically hold on to the opinion that it does happen. We may believe that it *is* so, from the authority of the Fathers and the most approved theologians as indicating the sense of the Catholic Church. We love to believe and do believe that this was the will of Our Lord in instituting those sacraments of the living for men as they are.

According to this more common and ancient belief, we understand the efficacy of these sacraments, and especially of the Blessed Sacrament, as follows:

The poor woman who suffered from the issue of blood touched the hem of Our Lord's garment, and virtue went out from Him and cleansed her who had been so long unclean. In the holy communion we do not touch the hem of His garment, but receive His whole sacred body into our bosom, and virtue goes out from it to cleanse our unclean soul even from mortal sin, if we are attrite and in good faith. In his oration for Eutropius, St. John Chrysostom pictures Magdalen kissing Our Lord's feet, and observes: The kiss of her impure lips was so different from the treacherous kiss of Judas. Those unclean lips do not defile those sacred feet, but those sacred feet, by the virtue that went out from them, did cleanse not

only her impure lips but also her unclean heart and soul. He who is attrite and in good faith does not imprint on Our Lord the treacherous kiss of Judas in receiving the sacrament of Divine Love, in this outward demonstration of friendship for our all-perfect and supremely loving Friend. He may be then as unclean as Magdalen, but the sacred body cleanses his unclean heart and soul even from mortal sin.

In this doctrine how sweet are the words of the Church proclaimed through the priest elevating the Sacred Host before giving it to us in holy communion and then saying to us: "Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world." We thus interpret these words: As the Lamb of God, He taketh away the sins of the world not only on the cross in the bloody sacrifice which "exhausted the sins of many," not only on the altar where the unbloody sacrifice is propitiatory for the living and the dead, but also in the Communion where and when He is said by the Church to take away the sins of the world, of those who are attrite and in good faith and have mortal sins which need to be then taken away by Him.

Again, how sweet are the confiding words of the centurion which the Church, through the priest, then places on our lips and in our hearts: "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof, but say only the word and my soul shall be healed." That is, my soul shall now be healed even from mortal sin, if not *before*, at least *after* Thou hast entered under the roof of my heart.

Do we accept the opinions of those more rigorous theologians? Then if we are in mortal sin, but have attrition and good faith, will we not with God's special abundant graces then given, make an act of perfect contrition and thus receive the sacrament worthily and partake of its graces? Do we accept the more common and ancient opinion of St. Thomas and St. Alphonsus and Suarez? Then will not the body and blood of Our Lord, by their own efficacy, purify us from our mortal sin and confer the other graces of the sacrament? What room is there for vain fears for those resolved to avoid mortal sin? What room for vain fears is there, we ask, between the horns of that dilemma?

Let us leave these opinions to the discussion of the students

of scholastic theology. Why have we dwelt on them thus much? It is not merely to bring forward a truth which is encouraging and consoling. It is to impress on the reader that attrition is a sufficient disposition for justification with the actual reception of at least some Christian sacraments, and yet that this is but an exception which proves the rule that attrition is *not* sufficient for justification without the actual reception of a Christian sacrament; that it is *not* and *never* was sufficient of itself; that without the actual reception of a Christian sacrament contrition is and always has been required by our good God as the absolutely necessary means of justification and salvation.

As we have heard the Council of Trent teaching:

“ . . . attrition conceived from the consideration of the turpitude of sin, or from the fear of hell and of punishment, can not of itself, without the sacrament of Penance, conduct the sinner to justification” (Session 14, c. 4).

This doctrine of the Council manifestly applies to attrition before not only Penance, but also Baptism and Extreme Unction, the other sacraments of the dead. It applies also to attrition before any of the sacraments of the living. Moreover, it applies to attrition of itself, in any circumstances, in all ages. Of itself, in the plan of God it is not and never was a conversion sufficient to proximately dispose a soul for receiving habitual grace, which destroys original sin or actual mortal sin. Such is and always was the plan of our good God.

Let us hear Father von den Driesch on page 13 of his little work, prefaced and endorsed by Lehmkühl, and translated and endorsed by Slater:

“To give you confidence in your ability to make acts of perfect contrition, you must be reminded that for many thousand years before the time of our Lord, in the old law, perfect contrition was the only means whereby men could obtain forgiveness of sins and enter heaven. And, at the present time, there are many millions of heathens and heretics, and all of these who are saved will be saved only and entirely by perfect contrition.”

On page 411 of his work previously cited, Cardinal Billot says:



“When there is question of dispositions sufficient for justification *ex opere operantis* only, it is the certain and accepted teaching of theologians that an act of charity or perfect contrition is necessary as a means; for then there is exacted that personal disposition which attains the threshold of that supreme virtue, of that virtue, I say, which is joined by an indissoluble tie with habitual grace.”

He means that we must make an act of love at least of the lowest degree by which, from love of God for His own sake, we are resolved to avoid at least mortal sin.

In a passage cited above, Perrone tells us what a favor it is for us to live under the new law because, with the reception of a sacrament, we can be justified and saved with attrition and without perfect contrition.

The great Dominican theologian, Melchior Cano, was present in the Council of Trent and took a leading part in its discussions. On page 258 of the third volume of his works he writes :

“In the Sacraments of the old law, there was no other merit but that of faith, since from faith came the whole of justification. Therefore, as no more of grace was given than what the faith merited, so neither was grace conferred except on one having the disposition which otherwise by itself was enough for the remission of sins, which disposition we call *contrition*.”

Previously, Cano had explained that sacraments of the new law confers grace, give that which we have not, that with attrition we have not grace, and that with contrition we have.

Pope Eugenius IV in his instruction for the Armenians after the Council of Florence, and the Fathers of the Council of Trent, show the radical difference between sacraments of the old and of the new law. Both are outward signs permanently instituted by God to signify grace. But the seven outward signs permanently instituted by Christ not only signify, but also produce grace, give it to those who did not before possess it, but were proximately disposed by attrition to receive it.

Some few theologians have taught that circumcision, in common with sacraments of the new law, truly produced, conferred habitual grace and justification. These are few in number, and are opposed in this by the great number of approved theologians and by the numerous schools of Domini-

can and Jesuit theologians. It is hard to see how they can reconcile their teaching with that of Pope Eugenius and the Council of Trent, who both speak universally of sacraments of the old and new law, and say that the former did not produce grace and that the latter do. It is apparently still harder to reconcile their teaching with that of St. Paul about the typical case of Abraham, the father of circumcision:

"Abraham believed God, and it was reputed to him unto justice. . . . We say that unto Abraham faith was reputed to justice. How then was it reputed? When he was in circumcision or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision but in uncircumcision." (Rom. iv. 3, 9, 10.)

Thus the father of circumcision and the typical example of all the circumcised was justified *before* he was circumcised, and the means which produced the grace of his justification before his circumcision was not circumcision but his faith, that is, faith animated by charity, perfect contrition.

In the preceding paragraphs we have been impressing on the reader's mind the greatness of the number from whom Almighty God exacts an act of love or of perfect contrition as the means of justification and salvation. For a moment and for the sake of argument, let us grant that this was not required in those who had the use of reason, before circumcision, and that for them attrition was sufficient. In comparison with the whole human race the Hebrew race was small in number. Moreover, only the males were circumcised among the Hebrews. Thence it is still manifest that our good God, before the institution of the Christian sacraments, required love or contrition for all the members of the human race except those very, very few. Suppose a Hebrew fell into mortal sin after circumcision. Was there provided for his justification by Almighty God another sacrament similar to our sacrament of Penance, which was instituted for the forgiveness of sins committed after Baptism? No. For such sins His only means was perfect contrition.

Was the religion instituted by God through Abraham and Moses a Catholic religion? Our Lord commanded the apostles, the Catholic Church, to "teach *all* nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." He said: "Preach the Gospel to *every* creature.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be condemned." "Unless one be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he can not enter into the kingdom of heaven." "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven to them, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained to them." He thus required Baptism and Penance, with which attrition is sufficient, as the ordinary means of justification for every individual of the human race.

Proselytes from other races were welcomed into the Synagogue. But do we read of Almighty God telling Abraham or Moses or any of the prophets to preach: "Unless a man be circumcised he can not enter into the kingdom of heaven"? By no means. Now, Baptism and Penance are the ordinary means of justification and salvation, and now, an act of perfect love or perfect contrition, in the plan of Almighty God, is the extraordinary means. But then, such an act was the *ordinary* means or remedy required by Almighty God.

Some readers may object. Since the coming of Our Lord, Baptism, Penance, and the other sacraments are provided by our good God as means of forgiveness. Those who have not learned or believed that these means are provided and demanded by the Son of God are themselves to blame for their ignorance. Those who do not actually receive these sacraments are deprived of this reception only by their own gross negligence to learn or to receive. We will not waste the reader's time by showing up the thoughtlessness and hard-heartedness of these assertions. Let us, for the sake of argument, grant them to be true. There still remains the truth that, before the institution of our sacraments, our good God required for justification from all an act of perfect contrition, and required it as the *ordinary* means. This manifests even to those objectors that perfect contrition was easy for all before the coming of Our Lord. Since His coming, His exterior and interior graces have been given to all in general in greater abundance than before, and the knowledge of His goodness is far easier for all. It thus becomes manifest that acts of love and perfect contrition were easy for all then, and are far easier for all now. And "easy" here means easy not only in the abstract and in theory, but easy for individuals as they were and are in the concrete and easy

in practice. And acts which were and are thus easy in practice were and are necessarily common in fact.

That conclusion, that acts of love and perfect contrition were easy in practice and common in fact before the new law and under the old law, brings us face to face with an objection or difficulty which calls for a thorough answer or explanation. In public and private discussions many have thus stated it to us:

"I am in hearty sympathy with your efforts to show that love always was easy, and that by it many were justified and saved even before the coming of Our Lord. I have followed closely each one of your proofs and explanations. I can not find any flaw in any one of their parts, or in the whole chain into which these links are logically joined. Starting away up, you have brought me away down to the conclusion that the old law was a law of love, and even away down to the fact that under it acts of love were common. Now that conclusion appears to me to directly contradict the maxim of the Scriptures and Fathers and Doctors, that the old law was a law of fear, and only the new a law of love. Moreover, the allegation that as a fact love must have been and was common under the old law appears to me to contradict history. The inspired pages of the annals of the chosen people teem with records of crimes. In them examples of virtue are most rare, and the motives of these rare virtues are fear of God's punishments and hope for His rewards, which indeed refer only to the present life and to outward and not spiritual adversity or prosperity. The motives are never based on pure love for God. This maxim and this fact are manifestly undeniable and appear to us to overthrow the whole fabric which you have been trying to build up by your many proofs and explanations."

This objection is not a mere man of straw made by the writer to be blown down by his own breath. It has been made by many others. However, it is a mere man of straw, and will be easily blown down, though not with one breath. If the reader will have the patience to consider the truths which will be placed under his eyes in the rest of this chapter and in the three others which follow, his mind will be satisfied that the old law *was* a law of love, and that under

it love *was* common as a fact. It is nothing but fair to test the truth of our conclusions about doctrine and fact by that maxim and by history. But in applying this test, we must beware of fixing our eyes on one or two texts or on a few facts, and shutting our eyes to more numerous and more clear texts on doctrine and to more numerous and more relevant facts of history.

Let us first consider the question of fact. Outsiders, who know our city of New York only from the headlines of our yellow journals before election time, might easily be led to believe that the practice of virtue here now, is not much better than it was in ancient Babylon, or in Sodom before its destruction by fire from heaven, or in the human race in the time of Noe and the deluge, when all flesh had corrupted its way. How many here in New York City practice weekly or daily Communion, or are devoting their lives to the practice of heroic charity in their homes or among strangers? Such items are rarely, if ever, printed by our papers as news, or as news that pays.

Suppose that we took our impressions about the morals of our city solely from certain sermons preached in missions here and designed to regain backsliders. Would this method be less unfair than to judge the morals of the people of Israel solely from the denunciations of the prophets at moments of apostasy?

Moreover, we must bear in mind the following vital consideration: There is a characteristic difference between the inspired history of the people of God written by Moses and others, and the histories of Greeks and Romans written by authors of their own nationality. One great aim of the Greek or Roman author is to glorify his own nation above others. How striking this aim is in Plutarch's parallels! Sallust complains of this in the following passage in chapter 8 of the history of the conspiracy of Cataline:

"But truly it is chance that rules in every thing. It is through her that, according to whim rather than truth, things are made celebrated or obscure. The exploits of the Athenians, in my estimation, were ample and magnificent enough, but somewhat less than fame has reported them. But because in Athens there came forward writers of great talents, the feats of the Athenians are celebrated throughout the whole universe as the greatest. Thus the valor of

those who did these things has been held to be great according to the measure in which they could be extolled by illustrious geniuses. But the Roman people lacked such copiousness of historians because, in Rome, all who have been the most able have been likewise the most busy. No one cultivated the mind without the body. All the best preferred deeds to words, and that their own great deeds should be praised by others rather than that they should narrate the great deeds of others."

It always has been human nature to think and speak well of one's own nation and ill of the alien. On the other hand, the paramount aim of the inspired historians is the glorification not of the Jews, but of God. "Let us sing to the Lord, because He has been gloriously magnified." "Our glory is the Lord." "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Thy name give glory." Such sentiments are of constant recurrence in the Sacred Histories. In speaking of their own people's vices, the inspired historians are famous for calling a spade a spade. This well-known peculiarity is often rightly alleged as a demonstration, or at least an indication, that their histories are inspired and have God as their principal author.

Has any of our readers ever perused the "History of Jewish Antiquities," written by Josephus? If so, he was struck by the fondness of that accomplished Hebrew for panegyrics of his own nation and its heroes. He is not less trustworthy than Livy. And yet, according to him, the Jew would be superior to the Roman of Livy's pictured page.

In the Fourth Book of "Paradise Regained," Milton graphically portrays the superiority of the Hebrews over the Greeks and Romans in poetry, oratory, and statesmanship. The telling way in which the English epic states this truth renders it manifest to any one willing to reflect on it.

Professor Ubaldo Ubaldi was the teacher and tutor of many a learned and zealous priest, bishop, and archbishop of the United States. All the alumni of the American College at Rome of his day have personal knowledge of the solid erudition and judicial wisdom of that modest scholar. The following passage from pages 707 and 708 of the third volume of his "Introduction to the Scriptures" is in harmony with Milton's verses to which we have just referred. He concedes the frequent lapses of the Jews into the idolatry and immorality of neighboring nations, but adds:

"Elegance and refinement of manners were never absent from the Hebrew nation. Those qualities were sanctioned and fostered by many enactments of Moses. Their courtesy and kindness toward foreigners or travelers were very marked. We see many instances of this in the history of the patriarchs and also in all the ages of that people. The epoch around the time of Our Lord and the apostles is an exception. Then distorted interpretations by doctors of the law began to exclude foreigners from a claim to humane treatment, and began to understand the word 'neighbor' as referring to Hebrews. This abuse is reproved by Christ in the parable of the Good Samaritan. *Signal virtues and illustrious examples of sanctity were never lacking among the Hebrews.* We can read nothing more admirable or more suited to stir the soul than the faith, obedience, simplicity, piety exemplified in the history of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph. We may say the same of the domestic virtues exemplified in the history of Ruth and Tobias. The glory of political virtues is not to be denied to the Hebrews. It is manifest in their whole history. In time of peace they were industrious and renowned for their devotion to agriculture. In war they were brave in repelling foes and defending the right."

As has been noted, the aim of the sacred annalists was not to write merely the lives of the saints who were Jews. However, many of the sacred writers do canonize many of the Jews as saints. Thus we read in 3 Kings xiv. 8, that the prophet Ahias told the wife of Jeroboam to go and say to her husband:

"Thou hast not been as My servant David, who kept My commandments with all his heart, doing that which was well pleasing in My sight."

David says of himself in Psalm cxviii, verse 10:

"In my whole heart have I sought Thee," and in verse 168, "I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies."

In 4 Kings xx. 3-5, Ezechias says of himself:

"I beseech Thee, O Lord, remember how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is pleasing before Thee. And Ezechias wept with much weeping. And before Isaías was gone out of the middle of the court, the word of the Lord came to him saying: Go back and tell Ezechias, the captain of My people: Thus saith the Lord the God of David thy father: I have heard thy prayer."

In 4 Kings xxiii. 25, the inspired historian says of Josias:

"There was no king before him like unto him that returned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength according to all the law of Moses."

In I Machabees ii. 50-61, we read the eloquent dying address of Mathathias to his sons beginning with the verse:

"Now, therefore, O my sons, be ye zealous for the law, and give your lives for the covenant of your fathers. And call to remembrance the works of the fathers which they have done in their generations, and you shall receive great glory and an everlasting name." He then makes an eloquent enumeration of eleven heroes, and concludes: "And thus consider through all generations that none that trust in Him fail in strength."

Here the catalogue professes not to be exhaustive.

In the eleventh and twelfth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews St. Paul makes a still more eloquent enumeration of saints of the old law, and glowingly depicts the efficacy and fruits of the true faith and of the hope which grows out of it. According to him, the works of these saints who had not "received the promises" were so holy that "the world was not worthy of them," and these saints were so numerous that he calls them "a cloud of witnesses." He specifies fifteen names, but manifests that his catalogue is not intended to be exhaustive.

We read in Matthew xxvii. 51, 52, 53:

"And behold the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top even to the bottom, and the earth quaked, and the rocks were rent. And the graves were opened and *many* bodies of the saints that had slept arose, and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection, came into the holy city and appeared to many."

Here the inspired historian explicitly tells us that the saints who had slept before the death of Our Lord were *many*.

The proportion of Hebrew leaders who were saints is far greater than the proportion of the leaders of any Christian nation with whose history we are acquainted. If we leave out the centuries of the early persecutions, when mounting to the Chair of Peter was usually a step to martyrdom, the proportion of Popes who were saints is not near so great as the proportion of the leaders of the Hebrew people who are canonized by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. How many more temptations to sin or tepidity among leaders than among the people! How great is the influence of example of leaders on the people! Especially where these leaders wielded almost absolute power, we should presume that multitudes of the people followed such holy examples. The king and all the people



of Nineve, at the terrifying preaching of Jonas, turned from their evil ways and did such penance that they obtained mercy and forgiveness from the Lord. As has been observed, such penance and such turning from evil ways were nothing else but *perfect contrition* in the proper sense, or penance motivated by love. And yet we see them practised by the multitude of the populous city of Nineve, where the knowledge of God and morality were far less than in Jerusalem.

If the reader will reflect on what was shown in the chapter proving that love is natural and easy for any one resolved to avoid mortal sin from any right motive, and even from simply servile fear, he will see that there is no sequence in the argument: "under the old law men were led to avoid sin mainly by fear of God's punishment; *therefore* then acts of love were rare." We must deny that "*therefore*." We must even conclude: "*therefore* acts of love were common and usual whenever the fear was efficacious enough to move to resolve to avoid mortal sin."

In the chapter on the unanimity of theologians in affirming that acts of love are easy, we heard St. Thomas teaching that God infuses into each soul which is justified a permanent force which is superadded to our natural power and inclines our will to acts of charity and enables it to perform these acts with promptness and delight. This is the infused habit of charity. As we also saw, some theologians hold that this habit is strictly identical with justifying or sanctifying grace, while others maintain that these two are as different as the substance of the soul and one of its faculties. However, all agree at least on this, namely, that wherever there is habitual grace there is also the habit of charity. Thus every one who, under the old law, was in the state of grace, also had the infused virtue of charity, or the supernatural power enabling the will to elicit acts of love with readiness and delight. As has been said before, some scholastic may urge that, for this habitual power to act, we need God's actual graces in addition, just as, in order to elicit the act of sight, we need to have not only a sound eye but light from without. For the sake of argument, we grant the preceding. However, as a *fact*, God gives abundance of light for the eye to see by, and He takes more care of our souls than He does of our bodies, and, as a *fact*,

He gives an abundance of actual graces to all, and a superabundance to those who are in the state of grace. Hence all who are in the state of grace have that within them which makes acts of love easy in practice. This is true in both the Old and the New Testament. Hence even before the new law, all who were in the state of grace could easily elicit acts of love in the proper sense, and acts that were then thus easy in practice must have been most common in fact. It is from the Psalmist that we learn: "His mercies are beyond all His works"; "With the Lord there is mercy and with Him there is *plentiful* redemption"; that "He has mercy on us according to His *great* mercy, and according to the multitude of His mercies He blots out our iniquities." How could this be the way of God in the old law without His giving interior graces in abundance?

P. J. Corluy, in Vol. II, on page 312 of his "Commentaries on Select Scriptural Passages, which are wont to be brought forward to prove Dogmas," has the following commentary on Romans viii. 15:

"You have not received the spirit of servitude again unto fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons in which we cry out Abba, Father;" paraphrase: "The Spirit which you have received in Baptism is not such that it has made you slaves as the Mosaic law of old made the Jews slaves, and it is not such that it should cause you again to fear God, your Legislator, with a servile mind. But in Baptism you have received the Spirit who has made you adopted sons of God. The Mosaic law, of *itself alone*, produced servitude unto fear. Yet sanctifying grace, communicated by the Holy Spirit to the just of the Old Testament, joined love to fear, and thus freed them from that servitude. They, too, received the spirit of adoption of sons, but not as a gift proper to the ancient economy, but as an anticipated efficacy or gift of the new covenant through faith in Christ, at least implicit." "The common teaching of theologians places the difference between the two covenants in this only, that the substantial donation of the Holy Spirit was in the Old Testament private, restricted and hidden, in the New Testament public, generous and patent. In this way they interpret John vii. 39, where it is said that the Spirit had not yet been given. The Holy Spirit was given to all the just also of the Old Testament, and abided in them according to *virtue* or by the gifts of sanctifying grace, habits, etc. This is admitted by all theologians."

Do we hold that Corluy's whole interpretation of Romans viii. 15 is the only one possible? No. We are fully aware

that some Fathers and other able critics have interpreted it somewhat otherwise. Do we hold that there is not and can not be any good ground for any interpretation which would contradict that teaching of all the theologians of the Church which is stated by Corluy? Yes.

If the reader bears in mind the above historic facts about the existence of love in the proper sense before the time of the New Testament, he is able to appreciate the absurdity of the various hysterical declamations of the Jansenists and Lutherans on this question of fact.

The following propositions of Paschase Quesnel, the Jansenist, were condemned by Clement XI in his famous Bull "Unigenitus" in 1713, and by the same Pontiff again in 1718, and by Innocent XIII in 1722, and by Benedict XIII in 1725, and by Benedict XIV in 1756.

"64.—Under the curse of the Law there is never done anything that is good, because sin is committed either by doing what is bad, or by avoiding it only from fear."

"65.—Moses, the prophets, the priests, and the doctors of the Law died without giving *any* son to God, since they made *only* slaves through fear."

"66.—He who wishes to approach to God ought not to come to Him with brutal passions, or to be led to Him through natural instinct or through fear, as the beasts, but through faith and through love as children."

"67.—Servile fear represents God only as a master—hard, imperious, unjust, impossible."

"68.—The goodness of God has abbreviated the way of salvation by including it all in faith and prayers."

Dollinger (III. 43. 44) cites the following words of Luther, of which we are forcibly reminded by those propositions of Quesnel:

"Moses is the master of hangmen, and no one equals or surpasses him for terrors, anguish, tyranny, menaces. Despise all that and regard him as a suspect, as a man banned and damned, as more wicked than even the Pope and the devil. For with his law he can only torture, terrify, and kill."

From the above we see clearly that these wild dogmatisms of Luther and Quesnel are not history and fact. We will see this more clearly still from what will now be said. We grant and must grant that the Scriptures, Fathers, Councils, saints, and theologians speak the truth when they say that the old

law was a law of fear, and the new law the law of love. But we must not and can not grant as a fact that no one in the old law was decided to keep God's commandments from the motive of love for God because He is good, or that no one in the new law should be determined to keep the commandments from the motive of simply servile fear. Moreover, we must not and can not grant that the old law was only a law of fear, or that the new law is only a law of love.

The Wirceburgenses, or rather, Kilber in his Treatise on Hope, page 227, paragraph 265, cites the following words of St. Augustine, "*De Moribus Ecclesiae*," Book I, chapter 28, number 56:

"In these two (fear and love) God, by whose pure goodness and clemency it is that we are anything, has given us the rule of discipline in the two Testaments, old and new. For although both *are* in both, yet there *prevails* fear in the old, love in the new."

If the reader cares to turn back to the chapter showing that love in the proper sense is natural in any one resolved to avoid mortal sin, with Kilber he will there see that in both Testaments simply servile fear is good and lawful, does not make a man bad, or a worse sinner, or a hypocrite, but is a gift, an impulse of the Holy Spirit, may drive out sin from the heart, is useful for acquiring the various virtues and leads to charity and justifying and sanctifying grace.

If the maxim were to be taken in the absolutely exclusive meaning, that in the Old Testament none received the Spirit of love, then we must take it to mean also that in the New Testament none receive the Spirit of fear of God's punishments. Our Lord and the apostles repeatedly teach that in the New Testament we should fear God's punishments. Hence, manifestly, to avoid absurdity, we must take the maxim to mean *more* and *less* and not absolute exclusiveness.

In our every-day language we often use similar phraseology. If interpreted with rigorism and without reflection, such phrases signify absolute exclusiveness. But, with even a little reflection, the writer or speaker is seen to have meant only more or less. Let us take the well-known and sound maxim of our books of rhetoric: "The poet is born; the orator is made"—*Poeta nascitur; orator fit.*" Does this mean that the poet receives *all* from nature and *nothing* from art, and the

orator *all* from art and *nothing* from nature? No, but that the poet receives more from nature, the orator more from art. The word "poet" derived from the Greek, means *maker, creator*. His chief specialty is originality of thought and diction, or what the books call the power of fiction. If we have not this talent from nature, we can never acquire it. The orator is one who is a master of the art of persuasion, or of swaying the wills of his fellow-men by oral discourse. The chief quality which empowers him to produce this result is action or delivery, and the chief means of acquiring what the old masters call "Godlike action" is judicious and long-continued practice. On the other hand, Quintilian rightly teaches: "It is strong feeling, with keen intelligence, that makes men eloquent"—"*pectus est quod disertos facit et vis mentis.*" Now these qualifications, if they exist in an eminent degree, must have been in great measure received from nature. However, Shakespeare, Milton, Dante, and all other poets, derived much from study and practice. Manifestly then this maxim of rhetoric means only more and less.

This way of speaking is more frequent in the Scriptures. Thus Our Lord says: "Weep *not* for Me, but weep for yourselves and your children." St. Paul says: "I have labored more than all the other apostles, yet *not* I, but the grace of God with me." The meaning is: "Weep rather for yourselves and for your children." "The grace of God being the first cause of my zealous and laborious efforts, is *more* truly their cause than I am." In the same way there is question of only more fear from the Old Testament and of only more love from the New. We have heard St. Augustine interpret the maxim in this sense, and have seen him followed in this by Kilber, who is here a fair representative of the sentiment of all Catholic theologians.

There was love for God not only *under* the old law, but *from* it. We see this truth with our own eyes in the following well-known texts:

"And one of them, a doctor of the law, asked Him tempting Him: Master, which is the great commandment *in the law*? Jesus said to him: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like to this: Thou

shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole *law* and the *prophets*." (Matt. xxii. 35-40.)

"And there came one of the Scribes that had heard them reasoning together, and seeing that He had answered them well, asked Him which is the first commandment of *all*. And Jesus answered him: the first commandment of *all* is: *Hear, O Israel: the Lord thy God is one God*. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind and with thy whole strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like to it: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is no other commandment greater than these. And the Scribe said to Him: Well, Master, Thou hast said in truth that there is one God and there is no other besides Him, and that He should be loved with the whole heart and with the whole understanding and with the whole soul and with the whole strength; and to love one's neighbor as one's self is a greater thing than all holocausts and sacrifices. And Jesus, seeing that *he* had answered wisely, said to him: Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God." (Mark xii. 28-34.)

"And behold a certain lawyer stood up tempting Him and saying: Master, what must I do to *possess eternal life*? But He said to him: What is *written in the law*? How *readest thou*? He answering said: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with all thy strength and all thy mind and thy neighbor as thyself. And He said to him: Thou hast answered right: this do and thou shalt *live*." (Luke x. 25-28.)

"Moses called all Israel and said to them. . . . Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole strength, and these words which I command to thee this day shall be in thy *heart*, and thou shalt tell them to thy *children*, and thou shalt meditate upon them sitting in thy *house*, and walking on thy *journey*, *sleeping* and *rising*. And thou shalt bind them as a sign upon thy *hand*, and they shall be and shall move between thy *eyes*. And thou shalt write them in the *entry* and on the *doors* of thy house." (Deut. vi. 4-9.)

"I am the Lord thy God showing mercy unto many thousands to them that love Me and keep My commandments." (Deut. v. 10.)

"And now, O Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee but that thou fear the Lord thy God and walk in His ways and *love Him* and serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and keep the commandments of the Lord and His ceremonies which I command thee this day that it may be well with thee? Behold heaven is the Lord's thy God, and the heaven of heaven, the earth and all things that are therein. And yet the Lord hath been closely joined to thy fathers and loved them and chose their seed after them, that is to say, you, out of all nations, as this day it is proved. Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of

your *heart*, and stiffen your neck no more, because the Lord your God He is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, a great God and mighty and terrible, who accepteth no person nor taketh bribes. He doth judgment to the *fatherless* and the *widow*, loveth the *stranger*, and giveth him food and raiment. And do you therefore love strangers because you also were strangers in the land of Egypt. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve Him only: to Him thou shalt adhere, and shalt swear by His name. He is thy praise, and thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things which thy eyes have seen." (Deut. x. 12-21.)

"If then you obey My commandments which I command you this day, that you *love* the Lord your God, and serve Him with all your *heart*, and with all your *soul*." (Deut. xi. 13.)

"If there rise in the midst of thee a prophet or one that saith he hath dreamed a dream, and he foretell a sign and a wonder, and that come to pass which he spoke, and he say to thee: Let us go and follow strange gods which thou knowest not, and let us serve them, thou shalt not hear the words of that prophet or dreamer, for the Lord your God trieth you, that it may appear whether you *love Him* with all your *heart* and with all your *soul*, or not." (Deut. xiii. 1-3.)

"This commandment that I command thee this day is *not* above thee nor far off from thee, nor is it in heaven, that thou shouldst say: which one of us can go up to heaven to bring it unto us, and we may hear and fulfil it in works? Nor is it beyond the sea, that thou mayst excuse thyself and say: which of us can cross the sea and bring it unto us, that we may hear and do that which is commanded? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and *in thy heart*, that thou mayst do it." (Deut. xxx. 11-14.)

"The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart and the heart of thy seed, that thou mayst love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayst live." (Deut. xxx. 6.)

"Therefore choose life, that thou and thy seed may live, and that thou mayst love the Lord thy God." (Deut. xxx. 19.)

These texts directly, explicitly, emphatically, and repeatedly contradict the gratuitous Lutheran and Jansenistic denial that the old law was a law of love. The scribes and doctors of the law affirm that, in the Old Testament, love for God and our neighbor were, respectively, the greatest and first commandment and the second commandment. They affirm this as a thing that all know and none gainsay. Our Lord in one of these texts affirms that the practice of these commandments is necessary in order to enter into life everlasting. Our Lord approves most strongly the correctness of their knowledge and teaching on these fundamental points as of the old law. This correctness is manifestly verified by the texts of

Deuteronomy, the last of the books of the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, which books were called by the Jews *the law* by excellence. Our Lord affirms that these were the most fundamentals precepts, not only of Moses but also of the prophets, of all the inspired books of the Old Testament. Moses openly implies that thousands of Israelites will practise the law of love, for, through him, God says to all Israel that He will show mercy unto thousands of those who love Him and keep His commandments. Here it is openly implied that there *will* be in Israel thousands who will so love Him as to keep His commandments, who will keep His commandments from love for Him. Moses enjoins and expects that observances of love for God shall be most frequent, not only among the comparatively few saints and heroes of Israel, but also in every home of Israel. He teaches that this commandment is not too hard for them to fulfil, is not too high above them; or too far distant from them, and is present not only in their mouths but also in their hearts. This is only another way of saying that God will Himself give them His graces to love Him, the good spirit of loving children toward Him their eternal Father and temporal King. This teaching of Moses, that love for God in the strict sense is easy for the many, is as explicit as the teaching of Our Lord that His yoke is sweet and His burden is light, and as the teaching of St. John that God's commands are not heavy or hard, and, again, as the teaching of Our Lord that His chief yoke and burden and command are love for God and our neighbor.

The formula of promulgating divine precepts through Moses or the prophets was: "Thus saith the Lord." The formula of Our Lord was: "I say unto you." "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all in these days has spoken through His Son." Our Lord is true God. But the old and the new law are the law of the same God, promulgated by the same one God, the author of each one of the inspired books and of each one of its parts. Although the new law is more a law of love than the old, the old had to be a law of love. The ceremonial and judicial or political ordinances of the old law were divine, but were merely positive enactments. The acts commanded or forbidden in them were respectively morally



good or bad because they were thus commanded or forbidden, as eating the fruit of the tree of good and evil was bad because it was forbidden. For a time, under the old law, polygamy was permitted by God. He also permitted to the Jew divorce, not only from bed and board, but also from the marriage tie. Polygamy and such divorce are contrary to the natural law. However, they are contrary to its secondary, and not to its primary, precepts. For wise reasons, the Infinite Creator and Sovereign Lord of the human race could permit polygamy and divorce from the marriage tie for a time, but He could not thus exempt or dispense any man at any time from the obligation of any of the natural law's primary precepts. God was morally free to create or not to create man. But once He created him with a spirit endowed with intelligence, memory, and free will, that is, to His own image and likeness, He was obliged by His own sanctity to command each one of us His children of the human race to love Him, our infinitely good Father, above all things for His own sake, and for His sake, too, to love as ourselves each one of our fellow-children of God, each one of the fellow-images and likenesses of God.

Without supernatural revelation we could not know the mystery of the Trinity. But without the words written in Moses and the prophets and the gospels and epistles, we could easily know as a clear dictate of natural reason our strict obligation to love God above all things for His own sake, and to love our neighbor as ourselves for God's sake. Thus, from natural reason itself, we know that the old law, being God's law, could not have been a law only of fear, but must have been also and primarily a law of love for God and our neighbor. This truth will be made still more manifest in the chapters which follow.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### *THE PSALMS ARE ACTS OF LOVE*

**T**HAT acts of love and of perfect contrition are easy in practice and common in fact, and have been easy and common not only under the new law but also under the old and that the old was far more a law of love than of fear, each one of these truths is plainly seen from a few considerations on the Psalms, the book of 150 sacred songs.

They were inspired by the Holy Spirit to be sung by the Jewish synagogue not only with the lips but also in the heart, and their dominant note is that of love, which Divine Wisdom did not look on as too high to be common in the hearts of the Hebrews under the old law.

The Catholic Church is not only infallible in her teachings, but wise in her laws, especially where they affect all her children in all places and in all ages. From time immemorial she has held the Book of Psalms under the eyes of her clergy and people more than any other book of the Bible, and even more than all the others together. They are by far the larger part of the body of the Divine Office daily recited by her priests, brothers, and sisters, or chanted on Sundays at Vespers for the people in her chapels, churches, and cathedrals. This practice is not of to-day or yesterday but from time immemorial in the long life of the Church. Thus Holy Mother Church, the embodiment on earth of the Holy Spirit and Its wisdom, plainly supposes that the acts of love and of perfect contrition in the Psalms are so easy that in all places and centuries they have been common in the hearts of the hundreds of thousands of her clergy and of the hundreds of millions of her faithful people. This law of praying thus firmly establishes the law of believing, as to the truth that these acts always have been easy in practice and common in fact, not only among the saints, who have ever been comparatively few, and not only among Christians, but also among the Jews.

Much light is thrown on our subject by the following responses of the Biblical Commission :

"In ancient collections of the inspired books and even in Councils, to designate the Book of the Old Testament containing the 150 psalms, there have been used the appellations *The Psalms of David*, *The Hymns of David*, *The Book of the Psalms of David*, *The Davidic Psalter*. Moreover, many Fathers and Doctors have taught that all the Psalms without exception are to be ascribed to David alone. Have these facts such weight that David alone must be held to be the only author of the whole Psalter?"

"No," replied the Biblical Commission on May 1, 1910.

"Can it be rightly argued from the agreement of the Hebrew text with the Alexandrian Greek and with other ancient versions that the titles of the various psalms prefixed to their Hebrew text, are more ancient than the version called the Septuagint; and that therefore these titles are derived at least from the ancient Jewish tradition, if not directly from the very authors of the psalms?"

"Yes," replied the Commission.

"Can it be prudent to call into doubt the aforesaid titles of psalms, witnesses of the Jewish tradition, when there is no grave reason against their genuineness?"

"No," replied the Commission.

"Considering the not unfrequent testimonies of the Sacred Scripture about David's natural skill, illumined by the gift of the Holy Spirit, for composing sacred songs, and considering the institutions founded by him for the liturgical singing of the psalms and the attributing of psalms to him alike in the Old and in the New Testament and in the very inscriptions which have been from ancient times prefixed to psalms; considering, moreover, the consent of the Jews and of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, can it be prudently denied that David is the chief author of the songs of the psalter, or on the other hand can it be prudently affirmed that only a few of these songs are to be attributed to the same Royal Psalmist?"

"No," was the answer to both questions.

"In particular can we deny the Davidic origin of those psalms which in the Old or the New Testament are clearly cited under the name of David, among which are especially to be numbered Ps. ii, *Quare fremuent gentes*; Ps. xv, *Conserva me Domine*; Ps. xvii, *Diligam te, Domine, fortitudo mea*; Ps. xxxi, *Beati quorum remissæ sunt iniquitates*; Ps. lxxviii, *Salvum me fac, Deus*; Ps. cix, *Dixit Dominus Domino Meo*?"

"No," was the answer.

"Is the opinion of those admissable who hold that among the psalms of the psalter there are some, whether of David or of other authors, which on account of liturgical and musical reasons, carelessness of transcribers or other undiscovered causes, have been divided into many or joined into one; and likewise that there are other psalms as, *Miserere mei, Deus*, which that they might be the better adapted to the historical circumstances or solemnities of the Jewish people,

were slightly re-edited or modified, by the subtraction or addition of one or two verses, saving, however, the inspiration of the whole sacred texts?"

"Yes," was the answer to both parts.

"Can there be sustained on reasonable grounds the opinion of those recent writers who, relying on the indications which are only internal or on an incorrect interpretation of the sacred text, have endeavored to demonstrate that not a few of the psalms were composed after the times of Esdras and Nehemias, nay even in the age of the Machabees?"

"No," was the answer.

"From the manifold testimony of books of the New Testament and the unanimous consent of the Fathers and the acknowledgment also of writers of the Jewish nation, are many psalms to be recognized as prophetic and Messianic, which foretold the future Liberator's advent, reign, priesthood, passion, death, and resurrection; and therefore must we altogether reject the opinion of those who perverting the prophetic and Messianic nature of the psalms, restrict those same oracles about Christ, merely to prophesying the future lot of the elect people?"

"Yes," to both parts.

Again much light is thrown on our subject by the following words of Pius X in his Bull of November 1, 1911, for the reformation of the Breviary, and particularly for bringing back the ancient practice of reciting all of the 150 psalms in the course of each week:

"As is beyond question, the psalms composed by divine inspiration and collected among the sacred writings, from the beginning of the Church have wondrously availed to foster piety in the faithful ever offering to God the sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips confessing to his name (Hebr. xiii. 15). And also from a custom already received in the old law, they have had a conspicuous part in the sacred liturgy itself and in the Divine Office. As Basil says, 'hence was born that voice of the Church,' and as our predecessor Urban VIII says, 'that psalmody, the daughter of that hymnody which is ever sung before the throne of God and the Lamb, and which according to the doctrine of Athanasius teaches men, especially those consecrated to the divine worship, in what way it is meet to praise God and in what words they may becomingly glorify him.' On this point Augustine beautifully says: 'That God may be well praised by man, God Himself praised Himself, and since He deigned to praise Himself, thus man found out how he should praise Him.'

"'Besides, in the Psalms there is a wondrous power to arouse love for the virtues in the souls of all. All our Scripture, both old and new, as it is written, has been divinely inspired and is useful for teaching us; but the Book of Psalms is a paradise containing in itself the fruits of all the other books, and it gives them

forth in songs and moreover with these fruits while singing presents special fruits of its own.'

"The preceding are again the words of Athanasius who in the same place rightly adds: 'It seems to me that to him who sings them the Psalms are like a mirror in which he may contemplate both himself and the movements of his own soul and may thus rehearse those inspired sentiments.' Therefore Augustine says in his Confessions: 'How much I wept in Thy hymns and canticles, deeply moved by Thy Church's voices sounding sweetness. Those voices flowed into my ears and truth was strained into my heart and thence the feeling of piety grew warm and there streamed forth tears and it was well for me with them.' Indeed, who is not moved by those many parts of the Psalms in which there is such sublime heralding of God's immense majesty, omnipotence, unspeakable justice or goodness or clemency and His other infinite praises? Who is not stirred with their sentiments of thanksgiving for benefits received from God, or of humble confiding prayer for benefits expected, or of the penitent soul's cry out of the depth of its sins? Who is not stirred to admiration by the Psalmist as he recovers the acts of divine goodness toward the people of Israel and the whole race of man and as he presents to us the dogmas of heavenly wisdom? In fine, who is not inflamed with love by the lovingly foreshadowed image of Christ the Redeemer, whose voice Augustine heard in all the psalms, either praising, or groaning, or rejoicing in hope, or sending up his sighs for accomplishment?"

To these testimonies of Popes, Fathers, and Doctors we beg leave to subjoin the following testimony of the Venerable Cardinal Bellarmine from his preface to his standard commentary on the Book of Psalms:

"The excellence of the Psalms is seen from their matter and form and style. This book is a compendium and summary of all the books of the Old Testament. With great brevity David has comprised whatever Moses handed down in history or prescribed in the law and whatever the prophets wrote exhorting to the virtues or foretelling future events. In Psalms viii, lxxxvii, ciii, civ, cxxxiv, and others, the Psalmist lucidly narrates the creation of the world, the deeds of the patriarchs, the wanderings of the people in the desert, their entry into the promised land and other like things. In Psalm cxviii with wondrous praise, David extols the divinely given law and inflames all to keep it. In Psalms ii, xv, xxi, xlv, lxxviii, lxxi, and others, Christ's reign, origin, preaching, miracles, passion, resurrection, and ascension and the propagation of the Church are foretold so manifestly that the Psalmist seems here to be rather an evangelist than a prophet. Finally, in Psalm i and almost all the others which follow, he exhorts to the virtues and dissuades from the vices by inviting, enticing, menacing, terrifying.

"And the Psalmist embraces all these things not in dry, prosaic

form, but in varied lyric style with poetic phrases and numerous and admirable metaphors. Indeed, by his originality of diction he ravishes souls to the praise and love of God in such wise that nothing more sweet or useful can be sung or heard. Thence in his explanation of the first Psalm, St. Basil justly writes that the Psalms of David draw tears even from hearts of stone. And in his explanation of Psalm cxxxi, St. Chrysostom affirms that those who sing the Psalms rightly, join in a chorus with the angels and, as it were, vie with them in praise and love for God."

To this preface of the Venerable Cardinal Bellarmine we append the following inspired words of Jesus the son of Sirach (Ecclus. xlvii. 9-13):

"In all his works David gave thanks to the Holy One and to the Most High, with words of glory. With his *whole heart he praised the Lord and loved God that made him*, and He gave him power against his enemies. And he set singers before the altar, and by their voices he made sweet melody. And to the festivals he added beauty and set in order the solemn tunes even to the end of his life, that they should praise the holy name of the Lord and magnify the holiness of God in the morning. The Lord took away his sins and exalted his horn forever."

We realize the frequency and solemnity with which the Psalms were sung from the following passage (1 Paralipomenon xxiii. 1, 5, 30, 31):

"And David, being old and full of days . . . gathered four thousand singers, singing to the Lord with the instruments which he had made to sing with . . . and they are to stand in the morning to give thanks, and to sing praises to the Lord; and in like manner in the evening, as well in the oblation of the holocausts of the Lord, as in the Sabbaths and in the new moons and the rest of the solemnities."

In the "Civiltà Cattolica" for February, 1911, Father L. Mechineau, S.J., of the Gregorian University and the Biblical Commission, gathers from the various books of the Old Testament a series of facts which are a sketch of the history of psalmody among the Hebrews, and he makes it clear that in spite of intermissions caused by persecutions and by some wicked kings, the people of Israel from David to Our Lord and the apostles never ceased to love and sing their sacred songs according to the rites prescribed by the Royal Psalmist.

Do the Psalms, then, express the praise of God? Yes, at least most frequently. Many say always. These latter seem

to be right. We can not agree with all the things taught by the Oxford scholar Cheyne in his volume on the Psalms. But he there affirms that perhaps with one exception there is at least an undertone of praise for God in every single one. As he rightly reminds us, a favorite title placed by the Rabbis at the head of the book was "Israel's praises of God," and they *are* "prayerful praises and praiseful prayers."

Pesch asks the question: "Why do we exact that Sisters who do not understand Latin should recite or chant the psalms in Latin which they do not understand? And his answer is that they understand at least that in the whole Office they are reciting or chanting words which express the praises of God.

The Church adds after each psalm the words "Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end." Must there not have been some similar practice among the Jews, the adding of Alleluia or some like doxology? Anyhow the Church thus manifests that her wishes of glory to God are not out of place at the end of any psalm, that they naturally flow from the sentiment of each and are in harmony with all.

Again the Church says as a preparatory prayer or prelude to the whole Office of the day:

"Open, O Lord, my mouth to *bleſs Thy holy name*: also cleanse my heart from all vain, perverse, and foreign thoughts: illumine my intellect, inflame my affections, that I may be able to recite this office worthily, attentively, and devoutly, and may merit to be heard before the sight of Thy divine Majesty. Through Christ our Lord, Amen."

"O Lord, in union with that divine intention with which thou Thyself did render *praises* to God on earth, I render to Thee these hours."

At the beginning of Matins, the first of the hours, she says:

"O Lord, Thou wilt open my lips and my mouth shall announce Thy *praise*."

At the beginning of Prime, Terce, Sext, None, and Vespers she says:

"O God, incline unto my aid. O Lord make haste to help me. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as it

was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia."

As is well known, the word "Alleluia" is Hebrew and is our most joyful way of expressing "Praise be to God." In the less joyful seasons it is not pronounced. However, it is replaced then by the aspiration "*Praise* be to Thee, O Christ, King of eternal glory."

Nearly every one of the hymns special to the time of the day, or to the season of the year in the groups of weeks around Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, or Pentecost, contains in its body express praises of God, or at least at its end closes with the doxology of "Glory to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

This praise for God is manifestly the dominant note of the three canticles taken by the Breviary from the Gospel of St. Luke for the respective hours of Lauds, Vespers, and Compline. To realize this we need only to gaze at the personality of their authors as they were filled with the Holy Ghost and uttered them.

Look at St. Zachary, the priest, just before God, walking in all the commandments and justifications of the Lord without blame. There had appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing at the right hand of the altar of incense, and Zachary seeing him was troubled and fear fell upon him. And the angel said to him, "Fear not, Zachary, for thy prayer is heard and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John, and thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice in his nativity. For he shall be great before the Lord and shall drink no wine nor strong drink, and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And he shall convert many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias that he may turn the hearts of fathers unto the children and the incredulous to the wisdom of the just to prepare unto the Lord a perfect people." And Zachary said to the angel: "Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years." And the angel answering said to him: "I am Gabriel, who stand before God and am sent to speak to thee and to bring to thee these good tidings. And behold thou shalt be dumb and shalt not be able to speak until the day wherein these things shall



come to pass, because thou hast not believed my words which shall be fulfilled in their time." And in due time they were fulfilled and Elizabeth brought forth a son. And her neighbors and kinsfolks heard that the Lord had showed His great mercy toward her and they congratulated her. And they made signs to his father how he would have him called. And demanding a writing tablet, he wrote saying: "John is his name." And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue was loosened and he spake blessing God and filled with the Holy Ghost he prophesied saying: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel because He hath visited and wrought the redemption of His people . . . And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation to His people unto the remission of their sins, through the bowels of the mercy of our God in which the Orient from on high hath visited us, to enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to direct our feet into the way of peace." (Luke i.) Here certainly is most thankful and loving praise.

Likewise every syllable of every word of the well-known "Magnificat" is most thankful, joyous, loving praise of the Lord by his Immaculate Virgin Mother.

The "Nunc dimittis" of Holy Simeon is keyed in the same sweet high tone:

"Behold there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon and this man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel and the Holy Ghost was with him. And he had received an answer from the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. And he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when His parents brought the child Jesus into the temple to do for Him according to the custom of the law, he also took Him into his arms and blessed God and said: Now thou dost dismiss Thy servant O Lord, according to Thy word in peace. Because my eyes have seen Thy salvation which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples, a light for the revelation of the gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel."

Besides these canticles taken from the New Testament, there are in the Breviary others taken from the Old. And each one of them without a single exception is a canticle of loving praise for God. This generalization is seen to be strict

truth from the following selections. They are nearly all in the Breviary as canticles:

Exodus xiv. 24 sq.: "And now the morning watch was come and, behold, the Lord, looking upon the Egyptian army through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, slew their host. . . . When Moses had stretched forth his hand toward the sea, it returned at the first break of day to the former place, and as the Egyptians were fleeing away, the waters came upon them and the Lord shut them up in the middle of the waves. . . . And they saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore, and . . . then Moses and the children of Israel sang this canticle to the Lord, and said: Let us sing to the Lord, for He is gloriously magnified. . . . The Lord is my strength and my praise and He is become salvation to me. He is my God and I will glorify him, the God of my father and I will exalt him.

"And Mary the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand. And all the women went forth after her with timbrels and with dances; and she began the song to them, saying: Let us sing to the Lord, for He is gloriously magnified, the horse and his rider He hath thrown into the sea."

Deut. xxxi. 30 sq.: "Moses therefore spoke, in the hearing of the whole assembly of Israel, the words of this canticle, and finished it to the end.

"Hear, O ye heavens, the things I speak; let the earth give ear to the words of my mouth. Let my doctrine gather as the rain, let my speech distill as the dew, as a shower upon the herb and as drops upon the grass. Because I will invoke the name of the Lord. Give ye magnificence to our God. The works of God are perfect and all His ways are judgments. God is faithful and without any iniquity; He is just and right. . . . Is He not thy father, that hath possessed thee and made thee and created thee? . . . He kept *His people* as the apple of His eye. As the eagle enticing her young to fly, and hovering over them, He spread His wings and hath taken and carried him on His shoulders."

Judges v. 1 sq.: "In that day Debhora and Barak son of Abinoam sung and said: O you of Israel that have willingly offered your lives to danger, bless the Lord. . . . So let all Thy enemies perish, O Lord, but let them that love Thee shine, as the sun shineth in his rising."

1 Kings ii. 1 sq.: "Anna the Mother of Samuel prayed and said: My heart hath rejoiced in the Lord and my horn is exalted in my God. . . . The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth and He shall give empire to His King and shall exalt the horn of His Christ."

1 Paralipomenon xxix. 9 sq.: "And the people rejoiced when they promised their offerings willingly, because they offered them to the Lord with all their heart. And David the King rejoiced also with a great joy and he blessed the Lord before all the multitude and he said: Blessed art Thou, O Lord the God of Israel, our

Father, from eternity to eternity. Thine, O Lord, is magnificence and power and glory and victory and to Thee is praise, for all that is in heaven and on earth is Thine. Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art above all princes. . . . Now, therefore, our God, we give thanks to Thee and we praise Thy glorious name. . . . I know, my God, that Thou provest hearts and lovest simplicity, wherefore I also, in the simplicity of my heart, have joyfully offered all these things. And I have seen with great joy Thy people which are here present, offer Thee their offerings. O Lord God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Israel our fathers, keep forever this will of their heart and let this mind remain always for the worship of Thee. And give to Solomon my son a perfect heart, that he may keep Thy commandments, Thy testimonies, and Thy ceremonies and do all things and build the house for which I have provided the charges. And David commanded all the assembly: Bless ye the Lord our God. And all the assembly blessed the Lord the God of their fathers."

Tobias xiii. 1 sq.: "Tobias the elder opening his mouth blessed the Lord and said: Thou art great, O Lord, forever, and Thy Kingdom is unto all ages. For Thou scourgest and Thou savest, Thou ledest down to hell and bringest up again and there is none that can escape Thy hand. Give glory to the Lord, ye children of Israel, and praise Him in the sight of the Gentiles. Because He hath therefore scattered you among the Gentiles who know not Him that you may declare His wonderful works and make them know that there is no other almighty God besides Him. He hath chastised us for our iniquities and He will save us for His own mercy. See then what He hath done with us and with fear and trembling give ye glory to Him and extol the eternal King of worlds in your works."

Ecclesiasticus xxxvi. 1 sq.: "Have mercy upon us, O God of all, and behold us and show us the light of Thy mercies. And send Thy fear upon the nations that have not sought after Thee, that they may know there is no God besides Thee and that they may show forth Thy wonders. Lift up Thy hand over the strange nations that they may see Thy power. For as Thou hast been sanctified in us in their sight, so shalt Thou be magnified among them in our presence, that they may know Thee as we also have known Thee."

Isaias xii. A canticle of thanksgiving for the benefits of Christ. "And thou shalt say in that day: I will give thanks to Thee, O Lord. For Thou wast angry with me. Thy wrath is turned away and Thou hast comforted me. Behold, God is my saviour. I will deal confidently and will not fear. Because the Lord is my strength and my praise and He is become my salvation. You shall draw waters with joy out of the saviour's fountains. And you shall say in that day: Praise ye the Lord and call upon His name, make His works known among the people, remember that His name is high. Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath done great things. Show this forth in all the earth. Rejoice and praise, O thou habitation of

Zion. For great is He that is in the midst of thee, the Holy One of Israel."

Isaias xxxviii. 9, 17 sq.: "The writing of Ezechias King of Juda when he was sick and was recovered of his sickness. . . . Thou hast delivered my soul that it should not perish, Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back. For hell shall not confess to Thee, neither shall death praise thee, nor shall they that go down into the pit, look for Thy truth. The living, the living, he shall give praise to Thee as I do this day, the father shall make Thy truth known to the children. O Lord, save me and we will sing our psalms all the day of our life in the house of the Lord."

Isaias xlv. 15 sq.: "Verily Thou art a hidden God, the God of Israel, the saviour. . . . Israel is saved in the Lord with an eternal salvation. . . . Be converted to me and you shall be saved, all ye ends of the earth. . . . In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and praised."

Jeremias xxxi. 10 sq.: "Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations and declare it in the islands that are afar off and say: He that scattered Israel will gather him and He will keep him as the shepherd doth his flock," etc.

Daniel iii. 49 sq.: "But the angel of the Lord went down with Azarias and his companions into the furnace, and he drove the flame of the fire out of the furnace and made the midst of the furnace like the blowing of a wind bringing dew, and the fire touched them not at all, nor troubled them nor did them any harm. Then these three as with one mouth praised and glorified and blessed God in the furnace saying: Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers and worthy to be praised and glorified and exalted above all forever, and blessed is the holy name of Thy glory," etc.

Jonas ii. 2 sq.: "And Jonas prayed to the Lord his God out of the belly of the fish and he said: I cried out of my affliction to the Lord and He heard me. I cried out of the belly of hell and Thou hast heard my voice. . . . When my soul was in distress within me, I remembered the Lord, that my prayer may come to Thee unto Thy holy temple. They that are vain observe vanities, forsake their own mercy. But I with the voice of *praise* will sacrifice to Thee. I will pay whatsoever I have vowed for my salvation to the Lord."

Habacuc iii. "When Thou art angry Thou wilt remember mercy. . . . His glory covered the heavens and the earth is full of His praise. His brightness shall be as the light. . . . The fig tree shall not blossom and there shall be spring in the vines. The labor of the olive tree shall fail and the fields shall yield no food. The flock shall be cut off from the fold and there shall be no herd in the stalls. But I will rejoice in the Lord and I will joy in God my Jesus. The Lord God is my strength and He will make my feet like the feet of harts and He the conqueror will lead me upon high places singing psalms."

Judith xvi. 1 sq.: "Then Judith sung this canticle to the Lord, saying . . . : O Adonai, Lord, great art Thou and glorious in Thy

power and no one can overcome Thee. Let all Thy creatures serve Thee, because Thou hast spoken and they were made. Thou didst send forth Thy spirit and they were created and there is no one that can resist Thy voice. The mountains shall be moved from the foundation with the waters. The rocks shall melt as wax before Thy face. But they that fear Thee shall be great with Thee in all things."

From these citations the reader sees that the inspired canticles of Mary, Zachary, and Simeon recorded by St. Luke are praises of purest and sweetest love. These canticles were inspired by the Holy Ghost, but in them He used as His organs saintly souls whom He had previously tuned and practised in the dominant note of the songs of their fathers.

Again, as the reader sees, that loving praise of God is the dominant note in all of Israel's inspired songs recorded in Exodus, Deuteronomy, Judges, Kings, Paralipomenon, Tobias, Ecclesiasticus, Isaias, Daniel, Jonas, Habacuc, and Judith.

We have not made any citation from Solomon's Cantic of Canticles, which is wholly tenderest love for God. We read this brief preface to it by Challoner in our Douay version:

"This book is called the Cantic of Canticles, that is to say, the most excellent of all canticles; because it is full of high mysteries relating to the happy union of Christ and His Spouse which is here begun by love, and is to be eternal in heaven. The Spouse of Christ is the Church, more especially as to the happiest part of it, namely, perfect souls, every one of which is His beloved, but above all others, His immaculate and ever blessed virgin Mother."

These are the chief songs of Israel which have come down to us. Many of them are war songs of victory. That of Anna is a birthday song, most similar to the Magnificat of Mary. That of David in 1 Paralipomenon is a song of thanksgiving for the receipt of the means to build the temple. That of Tobias is a song of captivity. Those of Isaias are songs of thanksgiving by the evangelist prophet for the future benefits of the Saviour viewed as present. That of Ezechias is a song of thanksgiving for miraculous delivery from death and sickness. That of Jeremias is a song of thanksgiving for the future redemption of Israel viewed as present. That of Daniel is a song of deliverance from flames. That of Jonas is a song of deep distress under the waters of the sea. The

title of the song of Habacuc is "a prayer of the prophet for ignorances."

What a diversity of men and women and subjects and times and occasions! And yet what unison in their ever recurring chorus of praise for God and His infinite goodness!

As we have seen, the Book of Psalms is a compendium of all the books of the old law, of all of its histories, prophecies, commandments, and exhortations. It is a paradise of spiritual delights gathering in song all the fruits of all the other books. All the others in each one of their songs are chiefly praise for God and His goodness. From numerous and weighty authorities we have seen that this is also the chief theme of the Psalmist.

And we see this for ourselves by a cursory glance at the text of the Psalms. Their first words are often an explicit invitation to praise God. Consult the alphabetic index of psalms or parts of psalms at the back of the Breviary. Eight begin with the word "*Lauda*" or "*Laudate*", thirteen with invitations to confess to the Lord, and this means to give Him glory. This is seen under the words "*confitemini*" and other derivatives of the verb "*confiteor*." Four begin with blessing the Lord under the derivatives of the verb "*benedico*." Others begin by inviting to sing to the Lord, to joy or to exult to the Lord, and each of these phrases signifies an invitation to praise. Others begin by proclaiming Him mighty, glorious, great, admirable, good, merciful, sweet. Here there is actual praise. Others begin by describing some one of His works of goodness to His people or to individuals, and here again there is actual praise.

Where there is no praise for God in the first words or verse of a psalm, it occurs in its course or at least at its end, sometimes by a striking contrast in an abrupt transition or lyric leap. Thus, Psalm lii begins with the words: "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God." It then describes the abominations, cruelties, and miseries of the fools who do not understand or fear or seek God and how He hath scattered their bones and despised them. Here, indeed, there is implicit praise of God's justice. But the last or seventh verse unexpectedly praises His goodness: "Who will give out of Sion the salvation of Israel? When God shall bring back the cap-

tivity of His people, Jacob shall rejoice and Israel shall be glad."

Nearly every one of the psalms ends with praise of God. Sometimes these closings are praise of God as just or wise or mighty, but most frequently of His kind providence, goodness, or mercy. We here cite the last words of the first ten psalms.

1. "The Lord knoweth the way of the just and the way of the wicked shall perish."
2. "Blessed are all they that trust in Him."
3. "Salvation is of the Lord and Thy blessing is upon Thy people."
4. "For Thou, O Lord, hast singularly settled me in hope."
5. "Thou wilt bless the just. O Lord, Thou hast crowned us, as with a shield of Thy good will."
6. "The Lord hath heard my supplication, the Lord hath received my prayer. Let all my enemies be ashamed and be very much troubled. Let them be turned back and be ashamed very speedily."
7. "I will give glory to the Lord according to His justice and will sing to the name of the Lord the most high."
8. "O Lord our Lord, how admirable is Thy name in all the earth."
9. "The Lord hath heard the desire of the poor, Thy ear hath heard the preparation of their heart. To judge for the fatherless and for the humble that man may no more presume to magnify himself upon the earth."
10. "The Lord is just and hath loved justice, His countenance hath beheld righteousness."

Nearly every one of the endings of the psalms is similar to these specimens, which are not specially picked out but taken one after another in the order of the psalter.

The last words of the one hundred and fiftieth or last of all are:

"Let every spirit praise the Lord. Alleluia."

Does it not seem specially providential that this final chord of the book of the songs of the prayerful praises of Israel for God should be praise so universal and so supremely intense and joyous? They forcibly remind of the dying words of the aged Tobias shout the songs of the eternal Jerusalem in heaven:

"The gates of Jerusalem shall be built of sapphire and of emerald and all the walls thereof round about of precious stones. And its streets shall be paved with white and clean stones and Alleluia shall be sung in its streets." (Tob. xiii. 21.)

No less striking is the parallel with Apoc. xix. 1 :

“After these things I heard as it were the voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia. Salvation and glory and power is to our God.”

It is reasonable and natural and usual in almost every kind of composition, at the end to draw the conclusion at which the writer aimed from the beginning and in the middle. Sometimes the topic of this conclusion is a summing up of proofs, or a restatement of the strongest argument or a forcible appeal to the chief emotion which he had endeavored to arouse. Many a busy man makes it a practice to read only the last sentence of each passage on the daily's editorial page. The most important part of each psalm is the ending, and this is nearly always the explicit praise of God and thus praise is shown to be the chief aim of the whole book and of each one of its parts.

Let us see the existence of the praises of God all through the Psalms by looking at them from another point of view. Heretofore we have been considering principally their words or form. Let us now consider rather their matter, the subjects of which they treat.

We will fix our attention first on the divine perfections or attributes. We have heard Pius X exclaiming :

“Who is not moved by those many parts of the psalms in which there is such sublime heralding of God's immense majesty, omnipotence, unspeakable justice or goodness or clemency and His other infinite praises?”

The Venerable Leonard Lessius has left us his ample, learned, profound and pious treatise on the divine perfections. Our French translation of his work is in two volumes octavo, each one of which contains more than five hundred pages. He divides his treatise into fourteen books. Each book is about a special perfection. They are God's infinity, immensity, immutability, eternity, omnipotence, wisdom, goodness, sanctity, benignity and love, sovereignty, providence, mercy, patience, meekness and clemency (with an appendix on God's adoption), justice and God our last end. His method is to define and prove each one of these perfections and then to draw fruits for our soul from its knowledge. Both these solid teachings and pious aspirations are enforced by the



Psalms more than by any other authority. That this is a fact may be verified by any happy possessor of these volumes by glancing at the references at the foot of the various pages.

Here we see in the Psalms explicit acts of love for God in the strictest sense; practical, efficacious love above all things for the infinitely excellent or good, on account of His infinite excellence or goodness, or supreme love for the infinite object on account of an infinite motive. Not only is the love supreme, but, as the theologians say, both its matter or material object and its form or formal object are infinite. From these considerations the necessary conclusion is how frequent true love for God has been in all who have recited the psalms rightly.

Another matter which is often treated by the Psalms is the future Redeemer. They sing not only God but also His Christ. That this is true we have heard from the decision of the Biblical Commission, and also from Bellarmine and Pius X and St. Augustine. Says Pius X:

“Who is not inflamed with love by the lovingly foreshadowed image of Christ the Redeemer whose voice Augustine heard in *all* the psalms either praising, or groaning, or rejoicing in hope, or sending up his sighs for accomplishment.”

All prophecies are comprehended better after the event than before it. And we who have received the promises and look back understand them better than those who looked forward with only hope in their fulfilment. However, the knowledge of the sense of the Messianic psalms was not uncommon among the Hebrews, unless they were of the class who had eyes to see and would not see or understand.

As we observe in the Gospel, the Messiah is described in the Psalms not only as David's son but also as David's Lord, begotten before the morning star in the splendor of the saints. All Catholics can easily love as saints St. Patrick of Ireland, St. Edward of England, St. Louis of France, St. Henry of Germany, St. Stephen of Hungary, St. Elizabeth of Portugal, St. Teresa of Spain, St. Aloysius the Italian, etc. But love for them is more easily aroused in those of their own land and blood. And love for the Son of God who was also the Son of David was more easily aroused in those of his own land and race and blood who looked on him not only as

the Saviour of all and the Light for the revelation of the gentiles but also as the Glory of Israel.

Another matter treated by the Psalms is history. As we have heard Bellarmine teaching:

“With great brevity David has comprised whatever Moses handed down as history. . . . In Psalms viii, lxxvii, ciii, civ, cxxxiv and others, the Psalmist lucidly narrates the creation of the world, the deeds of the patriarchs, the wanderings of the people in the desert, their entry into the promised land and other like things.”

In the historical psalms, it is the usual procedure to look on each fact recounted as an occasion or cause for making an act of praise and love. This procedure is manifest to all who will read any one of the twenty-seven verses of Psalm cxxxv, beginning with the words “*Confitemini Domino.*”

“Praise the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever.

“Praise ye the God of gods: for His mercy endureth forever.

“Praise ye the Lord of Lords: for His mercy endureth forever.

“Who alone doth great wonders: for His mercy endureth forever.

“Who made the heavens in understanding: for His mercy endureth forever.

“Who established the earth above the waters: for His mercy endureth forever.

“Who made the great lights: for His mercy endureth forever.

“The sun to rule the day: for His mercy endureth forever.

“The moon and the stars to rule the night: for His mercy endureth forever.

“Who smote Egypt with their first born: for His mercy endureth forever.

“Who brought out Israel from among them: for His mercy endureth forever.

“And overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea: for His mercy endureth forever.

“Who led His people through the desert: for His mercy endureth forever.

“Who smote great kings: for His mercy endureth forever.

“And slew strong kings: for His mercy endureth forever.

“Sehon, King of the Amorrhites: for His mercy endureth forever.

“And Og, King of Basan: for His mercy endureth forever.

“And He gave their land for an inheritance: for His mercy endureth forever.

“For an inheritance to His servant Israel: for His mercy endureth forever.

“For He was mindful of us in our affliction: for His mercy endureth forever.

"And He redeemed us from our enemies: for His mercy endureth forever.

"Who giveth good to all flesh: for His mercy endureth forever.

"Give glory to the Lord of heaven: for His mercy endureth forever.

"Give glory to the Lord of lords: for His mercy endureth forever."

We can not refrain from placing under the reader's eye another of the historical psalms. He is perhaps more familiar with it, having often heard it chanted in the vespers of Sunday. It is Psalm cxiii, and begins with the words: "*In exitu Israel de Aegypto.*"

"When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a barbarous people:

"Judea was made his sanctuary: Israel his dominion.

"The sea saw and fled: Jordan was turned back.

"The mountains skipped like rams: and the hills like the lambs of the flock.

"What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou didst flee? and thou, O Jordan, that wast turned back?

"Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams, and ye hills like lambs of the flock?

"At the presence of the Lord the earth was moved: at the presence of the God of Jacob:

"Who turned the rock into pools of water and the stony hill into fountains of waters.

"Not to us, O Lord, not to us: but to Thy name give glory.

"For Thy mercy and Thy truth's sake: lest the gentiles should say: where is their God?

"But our God is in heaven: He hath done all things whatsoever He would.

"The idols of the gentiles are silver and gold, the works of the hands of men.

"They have mouths and speak not: they have eyes and see not.

"They have ears and hear not: they have noses and smell not.

"They have hands and feel not, they have feet and walk not: neither shall they cry out through their throat.

"Let them that make them become like unto them and all such as trust in them.

"The house of Israel hath hoped in the Lord: He is their helper and their protector.

"The house of Aaron hath hoped in the Lord: He is their helper and protector.

"They that fear the Lord have hoped in the Lord: He is their helper and their protector.

"The Lord hath been mindful of us and hath blessed us. He hath blessed the house of Israel: He hath blessed the house of Aaron.

"He hath blessed all that fear the Lord, both little and great.

"May the Lord add blessings upon you: upon you, and upon your children.

"Blessed be you of the Lord: who made heaven and earth.

"The heaven of heavens is the Lord's: but the earth He hath given to the children of men.

"The dead shall not praise Thee, O Lord: nor any of them that go down to hell.

"But we that live bless the Lord from this time now and forever."

As Cheyne recalls, the words "Not to us O Lord, not to us, but to Thy name give glory," and the verses following were chanted as their battle song by Sobieski and his whole army of heroic Catholic Poles under the walls of Vienna as they charged and routed the Turkish hordes besieging that city and menacing Christendom. Indeed, the sense and force of each verse of this sublime lyric can be easily caught and felt by a soldier or even by a child.

What a striking difference between these two psalms! In the former how simple the brief sentences, how regular the order, how limpid the even flow of thought, how oft repeated in the refrain, admiration and love for God, whose mercy endureth forever. In the latter some of the sentences are of the majestic, suspensive, periodic form, and dramatically introduce the sea, Jordan, mountains as animated, acting, hearing. What a rich variety of figures, of antitheses, enumerations, personifications, hyperboles, apostrophes, exclamations, interrogations, imprecations on the impious, supplications for the righteous! And yet in both the procedure is identical, the premises are the same, and the conclusions are the same.

There is first the most vivid narrative of historic facts manifesting God's goodness to His people and to every soul, and then the practical conclusion that all must admire and love Him for these wondrous benefits manifesting Him as infinitely perfect and especially as infinitely merciful. There is first the sowing of the same seeds of holy kindly truths and then the reaping of the same rich harvest of fruits for our souls of thankful, loving, joyous praise. Both the truth and the love are imaged in bright, glowing pictures and brought close to every soul, and by happy repetitions long held there and imprinted deep into its understanding, imagination, feelings, and will.

How absolutely identical the tone of these psalms with the

tone of the song of the angel of Bethlehem and the multitude of the heavenly army, praising God and saying "Glory be to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of good will." For do we not hear the Psalmist, too, praising God and saying, "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Thy name give glory. He hath blessed all that fear the Lord, both little and great. May the Lord add blessings upon you, upon you and upon your children"? We have heard St. Chrysostom saying that he who sings the psalms rightly, joins in a chorus with the angels and vies with them in praise and love for God. Here we realize that this saying of the Doctor of the Golden Mouth is no exaggeration of hyperbole, but literal truth of sober Biblical criticism.

In other historical psalms the above-mentioned procedure from facts to love may not be so strikingly conspicuous and yet it is seen to exist in substance. Therefore, how many acts of love have been made by him who recited the historical psalms with attention and devotion in accord with the mind and heart of the psalmist!

Another way to see the love for God in the Psalms is to consider how they sing the virtues. Says Pius X: "In the Psalms there is a wondrous power to arouse love for the virtues in the souls of all." Says Bellarmine: "In Psalm 1 and in almost all the others which follow, the psalmist exhorts to the virtues and dissuades from the vices by inviting, enticing, menacing, terrifying." Mr. Gladstone somewhere wrote that they have thus done more for civilization than all human codes of law or maxims of philosophers.

Some have fancied that he who is impressed by God's menaces of punishment for sins can not at the same time love Him because He is good, or, at least, can not thence be led to love Him for His own sake. These shut their eyes to such examples as that of the Ninevites, smitten with terror at the preaching of Jonas and thence converted with the perfect conversion which obtained forgiveness, with the conversion based on the motive of love. They shut their eyes to the example of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. In his inspired epistles he tells us of his own high degree of constant love for Our Lord and he there too tells us of his own fear lest after preaching to others he himself may become a castaway.

These have argued: The Psalms inculcate fear of God's punishments, *therefore* they do not lead to love for God because He is good. After what has been said, we securely argue: The Psalms inculcate fear of God's punishment, *therefore* they lead and all but force, to love for God because He is good.

Some have fancied that he who is impressed by hope of God's rewards for the practice of the virtues can not at the same time love Him above all things for His own sake. As we have seen, hope for His rewards leads to love in the soul as naturally as the blossom to its fruit.

These argued: The Psalms insist on hope for God's rewards, *therefore* they can not insist on love for God because He is good. From the same antecedent we securely draw the contrary consequent, *therefore* the Psalms do insist on love for God because He is good.

As we have seen, the love of charity is a love of pure benevolence, is wishing well to God for His own sake, simply because He is good, is worthy that we wish well to Him. It is a love of mutual benevolence, in which we love God for His own sake and He loves us for our own sake, as a good child loves his good father and a good father loves his good child. The motive, the moral cause finally moving us to thus love God, is God's own infinite goodness. But the necessary condition, though not the motive or cause, of our loving Him, is His communication to us of His own divine beatitude. Without the medicine of fear, purging and cleansing the soul, few if any human beings would ever attain the soul's perfect health of pure love for God. Without the knowledge of God's benefits we could not have the *knowledge* of His goodness in Himself. Without the sense of these benefits to us we would not be *aroused* to the sense of His goodness in itself. Without the communication of God's beatitude to us, love of friendship in us for Him would be even *inconceivable*. This communication is an essential element in the very concept of the unique friendship of man for God, of the act of love or charity. As has been said, this communication is not the motive of pure love and yet is its essential condition. St. Paul at the end of his course, when his love for God had reached its zenith of greatest intensity, then had the most intense hope

for his crown of justice reserved by the just Judge not only for Himself but for all others who love His coming, and he then longed to be dissolved and to be with Christ.

The very first psalm promises to him whose will is in the law of the Lord that he shall be like a tree which is planted near the running waters which shall bring forth its fruit in due season, and his leaf shall not fall off and all whatsoever he shall do shall prosper. And the same first psalm adds, not so the wicked, not so, but like the dust which the wind driveth from the face of the earth. Nearly all the others likewise stir the soul to love of the virtues and often propose the sanction of rewards and punishment from God. But far from thus hindering pure love, they foster it.

We have heard the following objection from a scholarly Catholic, who, however, had not reflected before making it:

"How can the Psalms lead to love for God when they so constantly appeal to the *material* rewards and punishments of the present life?"

The ready answer is that Jonas menaced material punishments of the present life and yet led the Ninevites to penance motivated by love for God. Our Lord and the apostles appeal more often to punishments of the future life. But these are even more terrifying still, and yet naturally lead the soul to love, as has been seen.

The Psalms and all the books of the old law plainly suppose in the minds of the people of their time, belief in the future life and in its rewards and punishments. According to the unanimous testimony of the erudite, the Greeks and Romans and Persians believed in it. The Egyptians believed in it and the Hebrews for a long time dwelt among them. The Chaldeans believed in it and Abraham was descended from them. The doctrine of the future life is explicitly taught in many of the later books of the Old Testament, as Wisdom, Tobias, Machabees. In Exodus iii. 6, Almighty God said to Moses, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob," and Our Lord Himself explaining this text in Matt. xxii. 32, says: "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." St. Paul explicitly tells us that Abraham, etc., "looked for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," "confessing that

they are pilgrims and strangers on the earth. For they that say these things do signify that they seek a country. But now they desire a better, that is to say, a heavenly country." (Heb. xi.)

From the inspired Apostle himself we thus know that from the time of Abraham there was among the Hebrews the belief in the future life and in its rewards. We read in Psalm cxi, "*Beatus vir*," in verse 7, "the just shall be in everlasting remembrance, he shall not fear the evil hearing." Here, as it seems to us, the future life is plainly supposed. And in other psalms, there are many similar verses.

Why do the Psalms and the books of the old law in general insist more on the rewards and punishment of the present life? One reason is that very often there is question not of individuals but of the nation. And a nation as such exists only on earth, is affected only by earthly prosperity or adversity.

Another reason is that the human race was then, as it were, in a state of childhood, and children more than the mature look mainly to the present.

As a fact, however, the books of the old law in general and the Psalms in particular hold out not only material but also spiritual advantages and happiness for observance of the law and the practice of the virtues. Our Lord and the apostles do not disdain these motives of rest of the soul, of interior peace and joy.

Indeed, after all our own accumulation of lights from Our Lord and the apostles and the evangelists and the Fathers and the Doctors and the other saints, are not we too more easily moved to the practice of virtue by present than by future advantages? As many of the Fathers tell us, was not the happiness of the first Christians in their signal practice of fraternal charity that sweet trumpet that attracted to the Faith the hearts of the multitude who exclaimed: "See how the Christians love one another!" And do we not find this identical note in Psalm cxxxii, "*Ecce quam bonum*":

"Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, like the precious ointment on the head, that ran down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron, which ran down to the skirt of his garment, as the dew of Hermon which descendeth upon



Mount Sion. For there the Lord hath commanded blessing and life forevermore."

If we peruse only Psalm cxviii, "*Beati immaculati in via,*" even there alone we see manifest proofs of all of the preceding assertions. It has 176 verses. It is wondrously rich in its varied and even gorgeous imagery. Nearly every one of the 176 verses expresses in a new form intense love for God, for His word of truth, for His holy will, for the observance of His commandments, for the practice of the virtues, for the happiness in this practice. We see the intensity of this love in the following verses:

"Blessed are they that search His testimonies, that seek *Him* with their *whole* heart. I will praise Thee with uprightness of heart when I shall have learned the judgments of Thy justice. With my whole heart have I sought after Thee, let me not stray from Thy commandments. My soul hath coveted to long for Thy justifications. I meditated on Thy commandments which I *loved*. I lifted up my hands to Thy commandments which I *loved*. O how I have *loved* Thy law, O Lord, it is my meditation all the day."

In the following verses, we see the Psalmist loving the commandments of God because they are noble and lovable in themselves:

"Blessed are the undefiled in the way, that walk in the way of the Lord. They that work iniquity have not walked in His ways. By what doth a young man correct his ways? by observing Thy words. I have chosen the way of truth. Incline my heart to Thy testimonies and not to avarice. The proud did iniquitously altogether, but I declined not from Thy law."

We read in verse 120: "Pierce Thou my flesh with Thy fear, for I am afraid of Thy judgments." Here we see the Psalmist under the influence of the Holy Spirit in the same psalm fearing God's punishments, hoping for His rewards, loving the virtues for themselves, and loving God for Himself.

However, here the number of the verses of love for the virtues and for God is far greater than the number of those of hope and fear. Were we not then abundantly correct in affirming that this psalm alone proves the Catholic teachings that fear of punishments and hope of rewards and shame for sin and love for the virtues and pure love for God may exist together in the same heart and that they do not exclude but practically include each other?

That this psalm and nearly all the others contain love for God above all things for His own sake, is made manifest also from the following radical consideration. As has often been recalled with St. Thomas, St. Augustine, and all theologians, the other virtues may exist without charity or love for God in the proper sense, but without it they can not exist in a high degree of perfection or intensity, can not have their own full strength and beauty. But they do thus exist in the heart of the Psalmist, both in this psalm and in nearly all the others. Therefore, from this we know that there is love back of these intense aspirations even when we do not see it formally expressed.

The same is seen again from another radical consideration. In a preceding chapter we saw that a resolve to keep the commandments from the special motives of the universal virtues of religion, gratitude, obedience, penance, hope, fear, etc., is not love in the proper sense, and yet that he who has any one of these virtues, by the fact has a strong propensity also to love and that love is natural to him.

Now in almost every one of the psalms we see *all of* these universal virtues which have God as their terminus though not as their immediate material and formal object. As from the intensity of virtues as effects, we securely argued to the existence of charity as the one necessary commanding cause of such intensity, so also from the nature of these universal virtues, especially when intense, we securely argue as from preparing and disposing concrete causes to the existence of love as their natural and practically necessary effect.

We have said above that the "Confiteor" is the only Catholic liturgical art of contrition. Perhaps we should modify this statement. The seven penitential psalms are also Catholic liturgical acts of contrition. Manifestly they are models not only of attrition but also of contrition and that in a most intense degree. David here well knew whereof he sang. Like Magdalen and St. Peter and St. Paul he had grievously sinned and been truly converted by divine interposition. He has left us in writing more ample expressions of his sorrow and hatred for his sins and of his firm purpose not to sin anew, and they are in the form of addresses to God. He is more frequently placed before us as the model penitent sinner. Hebrews and

Christians are presumed by the Holy Spirit and by the Church, His Spouse, to have been easily able to elicit the acts contained in the penitential psalms. What a striking demonstration that acts of perfect contrition even in an intense degree have been easy and common among souls who with David have cried out "*peccavi Domino*"—"I have sinned to the Lord," "I have acknowledged my sin to Thee and my injustice I have not concealed. I have said I will confess against myself my injustice to the Lord, and thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin."

Above we heard Pius X exclaiming about the Psalms, who is not moved by their sentiments of humble confiding prayer for benefits expected? After the Last Supper and the institution of the Sacrament of love and Our Lord's sublime lengthy prayer for His own, He and the apostles, before going out to Mount Olivet, recited a hymn which the Fathers believe was one of the psalms. Among His seven words on the cross He borrowed from the Psalms the following two: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me," and, "into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

We have seen how St. Augustine hears the voice of Our Lord in every one of the psalms and thus considers each one at least worthy to be a cry from His sacred lips and Heart. The Church directs us to say before the beginning of the divine office the following preparatory prayer:

"O Lord, in union with that divine intention with which thou thyself didst praise God while thou wast on earth, I pay thee the tribute of these hours."

Here the Church is in accord with St. Augustine as to the intention and spirit of the Psalms being worthy to be united with those of Our Lord Himself.

We will now make some special considerations on the Psalmist's humble, confiding prayers for benefits expected, as parallel with the matter, order, and spirit of the Our Father, Our Lord's prayer, and will thus demonstrate again that the Psalms are dominated by the motive of love for God above all things for His own sake.

Do we pretend that any one of the psalms is as perfect a prayer as the "Our Father"? By no means. But we must contend that both these forms of petitioning, taught by the

same God, to be made *to* the same God, by *men* who are ever the same and ever have the same *needs* for the same spiritual or temporal good things, are in strict harmony and that the petitions of the Psalms, like those of the Lord's Prayer, come from the spirit of loving children by which we cry out "Abba" — "Father," and are thus seen to be acts of love for God above all things for His own sake.

St. Thomas thus begins his little work on the Our Father :

"Among all prayers the Lord's is the most excellent. It has the five excellences required. A prayer must be secure, right, orderly, devout, and humble.

"It must be secure so that we go to the throne of grace with confidence, as is said in Heb. iv. 16. It must not be deficient in confiding faith. It is said in James i. 6, 'Let him ask with faith in no way hesitating.' With reason is this prayer most secure. It is formulated by our Advocate, who is the most wise petitioner in whom are all the treasures of wisdom, as is said in Col. ii. 3. About Him is said: 'We have before the Father an advocate, Jesus Christ the just.' (1 John ii. 1.) Thence Cyprian says: 'Since we have before the Father Christ as advocate for our sins, when we ask forgiveness for our delinquencies, let us use the words of our advocate.'

"Our prayer ought to be right so that he who prays asks from God things which are becoming to him. Damascene says: 'Prayer is a petition for becoming things from God.' Oftentimes prayer is not heard because things which are unbecoming are asked. 'You ask and do not receive because you ask badly.' (James iv. 3.) But to know what to ask is most hard, because it is most hard to know what ought to be desired. Things which are licitly asked in prayer are licitly desired. The Apostle says: 'What to ask as we ought, we know not.' (Rom. viii. 26.) Christ Himself is the teacher and it is His to teach for what we ought to pray. The disciple said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray.' Thence the things He taught to pray for are most rightly asked. Thence Augustine says: 'Whatever words we say, we say naught else but what is placed in that Lord's Prayer, if we pray rightly and fittingly.'

"As desire, so also prayer ought to be orderly, since prayer is the interpreter of desire. Due order is this, that in desiring and praying we place spiritual things before things carnal, heavenly before earthly, according to the text, 'First seek the kingdom of God and His justice and all these things shall be added to you.' (Matt. vi. 33.) This order the Lord teaches to observe in this prayer in which are asked first celestial things and then things terrestrial. Prayer ought also to be devout, because the fatness of devotion causes prayer to be acceptable to God according to the words of Ps. lxiii. 5: 'In Thy name I will lift up my hands. Let my soul be filled as with marrow and fatness and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips.' Generally devotion in prayer is blunted by prolixity. Thence Our Lord

taught to shun superfluous prolixity in prayer. 'When you pray do not speak much.' (Matt. vi. 7.) Devotion arises from charity, which is love for God and our neighbor. Both of these are shown in this prayer. To introduce love for God we call Him Father, and to introduce love for our neighbor we pray for all universally, saying *Our Father, forgive us, lead us not, deliver us.*

"Prayer ought to be humble, according to Ps. ci. 18: 'He hath had regard for the prayer of the humble,' and according to Luke xviii. 10, about the Pharisee and the publican, and according to Judith ix. 16, 'The prayer of the humble and the meek hath always pleased Thee.' Such humility is observed in this prayer. For there is true humility when we presume in no way on our own powers but expect all from the divine might."

What is the bearing of these words of the Angelic Doctor on our point? It is this. He here enumerates the excellences required in a perfect prayer and shows that they are found in the *Our Father*. As is manifest, these same excellences are all likewise found in the petitions of the Psalmist. To prove their need and show their nature, the Angel of the Schools even draws on the psalms themselves.

Many holy geniuses have dilated at length on the admirable order in the petitions and desires of the *Our Father*. Sometimes these are divided into two classes, according as they ask for things pertaining directly to God or to ourselves. Then the first part contains three petitions and the second four. At other times the petitions are divided according as they ask to receive good things or to be delivered from evils. Then the first part contains four heads and the second three. But all authors remind us that each thing asked is ranked in the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh place as it ought to be desired first, second, etc., and that thus the *Pater* places perfect order in all the desires or affections of the human heart.

According to these saintly geniuses, Our Lord has left us in this brief formula a complete code or standard of perfection regulating according to faith and right reason all the possible good desires or affections of the hearts of beginners, proficients, or great saints. Some see exercised in the order of the petitions; first, love for God for His own sake, or charity; second, reverence due to God, or religion; third, the virtue of obedience; fourth, fortitude, or strength of soul; fifth, sixth, and seventh, deliverance from guilt and punishments and all

sufferings past, present, and future. The Angelic Doctor does not here discuss this order with such amplitude. He is satisfied to teach summarily that the Our Father has rectitude of order because it prefers things spiritual and celestial to things carnal and terrestrial.

Manifestly the psalms observe the same rectitude of order in their petitions. No one of the psalms equals the Our Father as a brief complete regulator of the order of all holy human desires, and in this respect they all fall short of its absolute perfection. Thus content with proving enough about the close parallel between the two, we beware of trying to prove too much.

As has just been observed, in the Our Father Our Lord taught us all the things for which we should ask in our prayerful conversation with God, and in what order and with what spirit we should ask them. The first three petitions are "Hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Each of these three is an act of love of benevolence to God, wishes, and prays for a good to God.

As we have seen above in a passage quoted from St. Thomas, in the first petition we ask for a good to God and in the second and third we ask for a good to ourselves. But Suarez in his treatise on prayer adds that in the second and third petition we ask for a benefit to ourselves, however, *principally as glorifying* God. It is a benefit to us that His heavenly and earthly kingdom or actual ruling come, that His will be done, to and by us, on earth as it is in heaven. But these benefits to us are also a good or glory to God and according to Suarez we ask each of these things both as a benefit to ourselves and as a glory to God, but here look on it principally as a glory to God our Father in heaven.

Each one of the last four petitions asks for a good to ourselves or for the warding off of evil from ourselves. However, not only the first or the first three but each one of the seven is addressed to God as Our Father who is in heaven.

And Our Lord taught us to say not only:

"Our Father, Hallowed be Thy name," but also

"Our Father, Thy kingdom come,"

"Our Father, Thy will be done,"

"Our Father, Give us this day our daily bread,"

"Our Father, Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,"

"Our Father, Lead us not into temptation,"

"Our Father, Deliver us from evil."

So that not only in each one of the first three petitions, but also in each of the last four, which refer directly not to God but to ourselves, there is an act of love for God, not indeed because of the matter or object but of the manner and spirit of the subject in the petition and wish or desire.

Now if the psalms, when they petition, do not ask these seven things or do not ask them in this order or with this spirit, at least often, then they are not fit prayers of petition for Christians and are discordant with the injunction of Our Lord to all of His followers, "Thus then shall you pray, 'Our Father,' " etc. (Matt. vi. 9.)

"And it came to pass that as He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And He said to them, When you pray say, 'Father, Hallowed be Thy name,' " etc.

Now, as has been noted, we do not maintain that any one of the psalms equals the Our Father as a perfect brief formula of petitioning prayer. Moreover, all the psalms taken together can not be clearly shown to contain so distinctly all the sublimity of either the filial or the brotherly love of the prayer of Our Lord. For "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all in these days has spoken to us by His Son." (Heb. i. 1-2.) And He has spoken to us more clearly and highly through His Son than in His message delivered through the prophets or angels of old.

"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love than this no man hath that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John xv. 12, 13.)

As we know from Our Lord Himself, not only the greatest and first commandment of love for God but also the second like unto it of love for our neighbor as ourselves, were already proclaimed in the old law. However, on this second precept the old law was not so clear and the manner of its wording was not so sublime. Although the law of brotherly love is

the same in substance in both, yet in the old law there was not the same knowledge of the love of the Father or of the Son or of the Holy Ghost for ourselves. Thus there was not the same knowledge of them as our models or patterns in their love for ourselves which we can not equal but must aspire to resemble in our love for our neighbor.

However, with this limitation we believe that any one of our readers who will take the pains to compare petitions in the psalms with those in the Lord's Prayer, will be rewarded by the sweet consolation of seeing with his own eyes that they are on the whole closely parallel if not substantially identical in their spirit, matter and order. Space will not permit us here to pursue this subject to the very end, but the following suggestions indicate lines along which any one may complete this sweet search of the Scriptures by himself.

Do the psalms invoke God as a father? Yes. We read the following passages in them:

"Hear, O Lord, my voice, with which I have cried to Thee. Have mercy on me and hear me. My heart hath said to Thee: My face hath sought Thee; Thy face, O Lord, will I still seek. Turn not away Thy face from me, decline not in Thy wrath from Thy servant. Be Thou my helper, forsake me not; do not Thou despise me, O God my Saviour. For my *father* and my mother have abandoned me but the Lord hath taken me up." (Ps. xxvi. 7 sq.)

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within me bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all He hath done for thee. Who forgiveth all thy iniquities, who healeth all thy disease, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion, who satisfieth thy desire with good things. Thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle's. . . . The Lord is compassionate and merciful, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always be angry nor will He threaten forever. He hath not dealt with us according to our sins nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For according to the height of the heavens above the earth, He hath strengthened His mercy toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our iniquities from us. As a *father* hath compassion on His children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear Him." (Ps. cii.)

In many other parts of the Old Testament we see God compared to a father or mother:

"In judging be merciful to the fatherless as a father, and as a husband to their mother. And thou shalt be as the obedient son of



the Most High and He will have mercy on thee more than a mother."  
(Eccles. iv. 10, 11.)

"Whom the Lord loveth He chastiseth and as a *father* in a son he pleaseth himself." (Prov. iii. 12.)

"Is He not thy *father* that hath possessed thee and made thee and created thee?" (Deut. xxxii. 6.)

"If then I be a *father*, where is My honor? . . . Have we not *all* one *Father*? Hath not one God created us? Why then doth every one of us despise his brother, violating the covenant of our fathers?" (Malachias i. 6; ii. 10.)

From the psalms alone we could construct the parables of the Good Samaritan, the Father of the Prodigal, and the Good Shepherd and thus bring out their idea of God's goodness and mercy.

As St. Thomas tells us, God is our Father first on account of the manner in which He created us to His own image and likeness, which He did not imprint on inferior creatures. Let us hear Ps. iv. 6, 7:

"Many say who showeth us good things? The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us; Thou hast given gladness in my heart."

Ps. viii. 5-7: "What is man that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that Thou visitest him? Thou hast made him a little lesser than the angels: Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor and hast set him over the works of Thy hands, Thou hast subjected all things under his feet, all sheep, and oxen, moreover the beasts also of the fields, the birds of the air and the fishes of the sea that pass through the paths of the sea."

Ps. cxviii. v. 135: "Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant and teach me Thy justifications."

These verses of the psalms are parallel to Gen. i. 26, saying:

"And God said, let us make man to our own image and likeness, and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea and the birds of the air, and the beasts and the whole earth and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth. And God created man to His own image, to the image of God He created him, male and female He created them.

"And God blessed them saying: Increase and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fishes of the sea and the birds of the air and all living creatures that move upon the earth. .

"And God said, Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed upon the earth and all trees that have in themselves seed of their own kind, to be your meat."

Now every possible creature, from the sun, moon, and stars to the diamond, the dew-drop, the blade of grass, the grain of sand, the worm of the earth, is a mirror reflecting the marvelous power and beauty of God.

“For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; His eternal power also and divinity.” (Rom. i. 20.)

But even in the greatest of them we see only His foot-prints; whereas in men we see the light of His divine face. For God contains each perfection of each one of His natural works in some eminent and more perfect way, but like man He is rightly said to be intelligent and free formally, simply, and literally. And man’s intelligence and free will make him peculiarly the image and likeness of God, as a son is like to a father, as like is begotten by like. True, man’s soul, in which he is chiefly like to God, is created out of nothing and the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity is the Only Son of God, of whom it can be said that He is begotten not made, and is Light of Light, and that He is the Son of God by his nature, proceeding from the substance of the Father by generation. However, of all things visible, man, created to God’s image and likeness in his intelligence and free will, is the most similar to the Only Begotten Son of God, who is the only perfect Figure of the Father’s substance and Splendor of His Glory. And in this borrowed sense man is equivalently called the “son of God” in Genesis and the Psalms and thus, therefore, God is equivalently called his Father.

According to St. Thomas :

“God is a Father secondly, by reason of His government. For although He governs all things, yet He governs us as masters and other things as servants. ‘Thy providence, O Father, governs it [the ship].’ (Wisdom xiv. 3.) ‘With great reverence thou disposest of us.’”

Thus far St. Thomas. Now the Psalms in the just cited passages explicitly teach that God has placed us over all the works of His hands. And indeed His fatherly providence over those who fear and love Him is seen all through the Psalter. The following is only one more specimen—Psalm xxii :

"The Lord ruleth me and I shall want nothing. He hath set me in a place of pasture.

"He hath brought me up on the water of refreshment.

"He hath converted my soul. He hath led me on the paths of justice, for His own name's sake.

"For though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evils, for Thou art with me.

"Thy rod and Thy staff: they have comforted me.

"Thou hast prepared a table before me, against them that afflict me.

"Thou hast anointed my head with oil; and my chalice which inebriateth me, how goodly is it!

"And Thy mercy will follow me all the days of my life.

"And that I may dwell in the house of the Lord unto length of days."

Again St. Thomas tells us that God is a Father, thirdly, by reason of adoption, because to other creatures He has given, as it were, little presents, but to us the inheritance and that because we are His children, but if children, also heirs. "You have not received the spirit of servitude again in fear but the spirit of adoption of children in which we cry out Abba, Father." (Rom. viii. 15.) Thus far St. Thomas.

The reader may object that this passage of St. Thomas, especially when taken with the words of St. Paul, tends to show that before the time of the new law, there was not, and could not be any adoption of children by God or any spirit of adoption. But, as we think, we have already sufficiently solved this difficulty by proving that these and similar words refer only to more of the spirit of adoption of children under the new law and less under the old and not to none under the old. For what is the root and essence of adoption of children of God? It is God's gift of habitual grace and its accompanying gift of love for God. By it alone we are made sharers of the divine nature and become more perfect images and likenesses and heirs of God than by the gift of intelligence and free will received in our creation.

By our natural intelligence and free will we have the power to see God reflected in the mirror of His creatures and to love Him proportionally. Whereas by the supernatural gift of habitual grace we receive power ultimately in heaven to know God as He is and by a direct immediate intuition to see Him face to face and to love His beauty proportionally, and thus we become much more perfect images and likenesses and

heirs of God by a knowledge and love of God natural to Him alone and transcending the natural powers of the angels and even of the Seraphim.

Now as a fact did not all those who from Adam to Our Lord's time were justified in God's sight, possess this habitual grace and this virtue of charity and their inherent adoption as children and heirs of God and coheirs with Jesus Christ? To say the contrary would be absurd. Therefore, although the just souls of the old law had not our full knowledge of this treasure or our full enjoyment of its use and fruits, they were still owners and possessors of the treasure itself.

But do the Psalms tell us of this adoption by God? Yes, thus Ps. xv. 5:

"The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup. It is Thou that wilt restore my inheritance to me."

"Who art in heaven."

"The Lord is high above all nations and His glory above the heavens. Who is as the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high and looketh down on the low things in heaven and in earth, raising up the needy from the earth, and lifting up the poor out of the dung-hill, that He may place him with princes, with the princes of His people. Who maketh the barren woman to dwell in a house: the joyful mother of children?" (Ps. cxii. 4-9.)

"The Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven. His eyes look on the poor man, His eyelids examine the sons of man." (Ps. x. 5.)

The Psalms often dwell on God's immensity and teach us that He is everywhere. But like the Our Father, they often pray to Him in heaven. There the Creator, Preserver and Ruler of these most noble corporeal objects holds His royal court among the saints and angels and shares with them His own infinite beatitude and most specially manifests His majesty, goodness and mercy. There the Almighty Father and King has prepared a true home for us and for all created and redeemed by Him. By placing before us Our Father as in heaven, Our Lord and the Psalmist alike detach our hearts from disorderly affections for the earth and things earthly and move us to faith and hope in God and to love for Him and our neighbor.

"Hallowed be Thy name." "Name" here imports either

the divine reputation or the divine personality itself. In either sense the petition asks that God may be known, loved, and praised, in other words, that He may receive glory. This petition recurs hundreds of times in the Psalms.

"Thy Kingdom come." We do not here ask that God may have dominion over all things. This right is inseparable from the majesty of the Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. We ask that *de facto* He may rule in the hearts of the just. Suarez says that we here pray for the coming of His ruling not only by His grace in the hearts of the just and by the triumph of His Church, but also by the communication of His own beatitude to the just, for His ruling not only in war on earth but also in peace in heaven. As is manifest all these things are often asked by the Psalmist.

"Thy will be done." We here ask that all human wills on earth may be conformed to the divine will as manifested in God's precepts, counsels or plans, that we may all love His will like the saints and angels in heaven. The Psalmist often loves not only the law of God and all its justifications but also all of His ways as wise and sweet.

"Give us this day our daily bread." The word "daily" admonishes us to trust God and cast away disorderly solicitude for the morrow. This lesson is frequent in the Psalms. The petition asks that we may receive from God the means of strengthening our soul and body. Both are often asked in the Psalms.

"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." We hope and pray for greater mercy than any of which we are capable toward our offending neighbor. "*Sicut*"—"as" does not mean "in proportion as." It expresses only a condition. We can expect mercy from our Father only on condition that we are merciful to our brother and fellow-servant, who is God's child like ourselves.

The Psalms often promise God's blessings to him who is not hard-hearted but merciful. We have heard St. Thomas quoting from the Old Testament Judith ix. 16. "The prayer of the humble and *meeek* hath always pleased Thee." All the penitential psalms besides many others ask forgiveness for our trespasses.

"Lead us not into temptation." Here temptation is not a

mere trial which is good and can come from God in the proper sense, but an occasion of sin or inclination to it. St. James clearly teaches that God can not be properly said to be the author of temptation or inclination to moral evil. "Lead us" is a way of speaking peculiar to the Scriptures and means "permit us not to fall into any temptation to which we will yield." In some parts of France this petition is translated in the catechism thus, "Permit us not to succumb to temptation." In Exodus God is said to harden the heart of Pharaoh. This means to permit Pharaoh to harden his own heart. In the Psalms God is often begged to come to our aid, to keep us in all our ways, to direct our paths, etc.

He is also often begged to deliver us from every manner of evil, to say to our soul, "I am thy salvation."

In this chapter we submit that we have shown conclusively that he who says the Psalms rightly makes many acts of love for God above all things for His own sake. What have been our proofs? They are these:

If the Psalms were not, at least largely, songs of love, wise Mother Church would not and could not under the new law of love have held them under the eyes of her faithful clergy and people more than any and even all the other books of the Bible. That they *are* songs of love we know from the authority of the Synagogue and of the Christian Church, from non-Catholic Christian scholars, from Popes, Fathers, and theologians, and from the fact that all the sacred canticles outside the Book of Psalms are also songs of love. Many of the psalms begin and many more end with words of praise and loving praise of God. Many of them place before us one or all of the divine attributes as objects of admiration and love. They celebrate more often than any other attribute, the divine mercy which more than any other moves us to love. Many present the lovable picture of the Messiah. Some of them rehearse historical facts and from these reap the fruit of love for God on account of His kindness. In nearly all his songs the Psalmist arouses love for the virtues of faith and hope, and of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance, which lead to love, and he arouses such an intensity of love for these virtues as can not exist without love for God for His own sake, such an intense love for the law as can not exist without love

for God, its author. Indeed, he often leads us first to love for God and thence to love for His law or the virtues. He often sings fear of God's punishments and hope for His rewards as sanctions of the law, but from such fear and hope he leads to love for the law and for its divine Author. The Psalms are often petitioning prayer and its petitions are in accord with the Our Father and the Our Father is a prayer of love. From these considerations it has been made manifest that he who has recited the Psalms rightly has made many acts of love.

That these acts of love are not in prose but in song, and such sweet song, has made them easier to be said from the heart. "Let me make a people's songs and I care not who makes their laws." If I am against those laws and can make sweetest songs against them and get the people to love to sing my songs and no others I will soon have that people's whole heart and soul and mind and strength irresistibly arrayed on my side against those laws and their maker and their penalties.

When the world war first broke out there was a debate in a party of Americans as to whether Italy would decide to fight with Germany and Austria against the Allies. It was held by some that she would. Their argument was that the kings and governments of Italy had long made her a part of the triple alliance, had made the supreme law of a treaty binding her to fight with Germany and Austria in the conditions now verified. One of those present took the opposite side in the debate and recited parts of a stirring hymn, which has been sung for two generations by all classes of Italians from the Alps to Ætna. Among other lines of this song he recited the following snatches: "The homes of Italy are made for us, there on the Danube are the homes for yours. Too long has lasted the time of our slavery. German rod shall not rule Italy. The race of Rome do not grow up for the yoke. Get out of Italy, get out, foreigner. On all with fire, on all with steel."

The newspapers soon reported that the Italian people and soldiers loudly protested that they would make a revolution and overthrow the king and government rather than obey any such supreme treaty law, if it existed. The debater had rightly

calculated on this deep, widespread, anti-Austrian sentiment of the people from that one song.

A law is a reasonable rule of actions made for the common welfare by one who has charge of the community and by him promulgated and also sanctioned with promises of rewards and menaces of penalties. The God-fearing man is moved to observe this rule from a sense of duty to obey constituted authority. For him there is no power or authority but from God, to obey authority is to please and obey God, to resist authority is to resist God and to purchase damnation unto himself. Again he is moved to observe this rule by its being reasonable and conducive to his own and his country's good, to its order, peace, security, and prosperity. He may be stimulated not a little also by the law's promises and menaces. Finally, he may know that the lawgivers are wise and good and may love them for their own sake and love the laws for their sake. Thus some of us still love George Washington and the other fathers of our Constitution and still love our fundamental laws not only for themselves and for the marvelous prosperity, security, liberty, they have preserved for one hundred years, but also for their wise and patriotic makers.

The case of Israel was unique. God was the maker of the people's laws and also the chief maker of that people's songs, and used all the power of song to fill their souls with regard for His sanctions of fear and hope, with love for their country and nation and laws and for their divine King.

Our laws and their authority and sanctions are worded in plain, dry, literal prose. The Psalms word the same things in beautiful, sublime, touching poetry. They are full of figures, departures from the common, ordinary turns of language to others which add light, grace, and strength; seize the attention; strike the imagination; move the heart to holy fear, shame, anger, hate, sadness, love, joy, peace, and every other noble human emotion. By placing the lovable and loving object of love in a vivid picture close to the mind and heart, they forcefully persuade the will to make Him and His law the rule of action and life. The Psalms are not only poetry but lyric poetry, which is nearly all feeling, and true feeling when the songs are true poetry.

Poetry has more power than prose to move the heart and



will, not only because it places the object of a noble passion more vividly before the mind, but also because it calls into its aid the fascination of music. It is written in meter, numbers, rhythm and is musical even when not sung and only recited. Even in the Latin or English literal versions all feel that there is such music in the Psalms. Some think they have been successful in scanning them, in dissecting their secret music, but all can feel and enjoy it. Many say that the rhythm of the Psalmist is founded on consonance of thoughts and feelings rather than of sounds. It has been admirably imitated by Thomas à Kempis. The sentences of the "Imitation of Christ" are always in rhythm and often in rhyme. Their melody is lost in all translations. In recent years scholars have made complete studies of the rhythm in the "Oremuses" of the Roman Missal. One thing they have proved to a demonstration, that all the more ancient "Oremuses" are easy to sing and that many of the more modern ones are a strain on even the best trained voice. Every verse in the Psalms is easy to chant and is thus seen to be metrical and musical.

But the Psalmist availed himself not only of the music of rhythm but also of the sweet sounds of the human voice and of many accompanying instruments. And "what passions can not music raise and quell!" Here Pope voices the judgment not only of poets but also of the human race. Above we have seen described the solemnity and frequency with which the Psalms were chanted in the Temple. The captive Jews hung their harps on the weeping willows by the waters of Babylon and refused to sing the canticle of Sion and the Lord in that hated foreign land, but they constantly sung them in their own land not only when worshiping in the Temple but also when resting in their homes, or laboring in their orchards, vineyards, and fields, or when watching their flocks on their hills and mountains, or when traveling on their roads or rowing or sailing in their boats over their rivers and seas. This practice was continued by the Christians in the Holy Land in the time of St. Jerome as he himself tells us. There was an age in the history of the Church when no one could be consecrated a bishop unless he could accurately and easily recite by heart each one of the one hundred and fifty psalms of Psalter.

Before printing had been invented, when manuscripts were

rare, what power and exercise of memory in bards and minstrels! At present how many an old man or old woman unable to read comes to us from some thoroughly Catholic foreign shore and knows by heart countless Catholic prayers and hymns and often puts to shame even some men who many years ago graduated at one of our Catholic colleges but now can not recite the Apostle's Creed when they stand as god-fathers at the baptismal font. Perhaps Vespers are less frequented now than ever before in the history of the Church, and perhaps the average Catholic now has less knowledge and love of the Psalms than in any preceding age, and perhaps also there was never before such a widespread tendency to indifference for God, the soul, and virtue, or such absorption of minds in matter, force, sensuality, and pride which are now often publicly beatified and canonized.

Are not many parts of the Psalms obscure even to the erudite Greek and Hebrew critic? Perhaps to some such learned critics who drown themselves in trifles, they are more obscure than to the reader of ordinary good sense and judgment who reads ahead and fixes his mind more on the trend of a whole song and thus gets more light on the special parts than can be gained by the study of vowel-dots, which after all were not inserted by the original Psalmist, but invented more than a thousand years after he wrote.

There has been religiously scrupulous diligence to preserve the original texts on the part of the Synagogue and the Church and particularly on the part of the so-called "ignorant monks" of the so-called "dark ages," to whom we largely owe the preservation of the texts not only of the Scriptures and the Fathers but also of the profane classics. And this diligence has been aided through thousands of years by the special providence of Almighty God over these His precious deposits of revealed truth and sanctity. In spite of all this human care and divine assistance, here and there the original text of a verse in a psalm has been hopelessly corrupted or lost. Yet even from the specimens above cited, the reader realizes for himself that there are still countless verses lucidly placing before him the Psalmist's acts of love for God on account of His infinite goodness.

Do the Psalms awaken love for God in our hearts as easily

as they did in the devout members of the children of Israel while they remained in the land of promise flowing with milk and honey and abounding with the special spiritual blessings vouchsafed to the favored race from which was to be born the Glory of Israel and the Light of the Gentiles? Yes and no. As has often been noted, we have much greater knowledge about the goodness of the Father and of His Christ and of His Holy Spirit than was possible before the coming of Our Lord and of the Holy Ghost. We are thus more able to appreciate the divine goodness which the Psalmist so graphically places under our eye in his descriptions of the divine attributes and in his narratives of the divine benefits. Many of the pictures of the Psalms draw their colors from topics familiar to all. Now as then there are seen by all the same sky, and clouds, and sun, and moon, and stars, and rainbow, and lightning, and fountains, and rivers, and seas, and waves, and winds, and snows, and frosts, and rains, and dews, and mountains, and valleys, and plains, and forests, and orchards, and vineyards, and fields, and gardens, and herds, and flocks, and birds, and fishes, and fathers, and mothers, and children, and old, and young, and rich, and poor, and mighty, and weak, and saints, and sinners. But the psalmist often draws the matter of his songs also from topics which are most concretely special to Israel and Palestine.

That God is the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, and Moses, and Aaron, and Josue, and Samuel, and David, the God of these and so many other holy patriarchs and prophets, and that the Messiah is to be the son of David, this topic does not appeal to us as it did to the devout Hebrew. "*Gloria filiorum patres eorum.*" Truly great fathers are the glory of sons. The Jews still have more love for their own blood than is seen in any other race. And it is natural that they should. Love for their fathers and their holy examples more easily awakened love for God in them than in us.

According to Joseph de Maistre the odes of Greece and Rome, being largely about women, wine, and blood, or wrestlers, boxers, and horses are of interest only to certain times and places, and are now corpses from which the spirit has departed never to be recalled. But according to him, the

Psalms, picturing human life from its spiritual and noblest side and treating of God, the soul, truth, and virtue that are immortal and never die, make their Jerusalem of interest to man as man in all ages and lands and as real and living to our minds as to that of David and all the sons of Israel. There may be much truth in these sentiments with regard to Christians who have the broad-minded education and the noble intelligence and character of the great De Maistre, who gloried in being a son of the Crusaders, but even such do not exclaim with the Hebrew about that favored part of the earth,

“This is my own, my native land!”

And even such are not so responsive to the Psalmist's thrills of love for Hermon, Sion, and other sacred spots hallowed by sweet memories of saintly heroic sires and of God, Israel's King, who dwelt there as in His earthly home.

Reference to the flora of the Holy Land, to its vines and fig-trees and palms and hyssop on the wall and the cedars of Libanus, do not go home to our hearts as to those more familiar with them, and do not so easily raise our souls from these creatures to the Creator and His love.

But whether as a fact in reciting the Psalms Jews and Christians have made frequent acts of true love for God above all things for His own sake, or whether these acts have been more easy and common among the Jews than among the Christians, is a question which does not need to be decided for our argument, which is simply this:

The Psalms manifestly contain very many acts of love for God in the proper sense. The Holy Spirit and the Church manifestly suppose that the multitudes of the Jews and Christians can say the Psalms not only with their lips but also in their hearts. Therefore, those who best know the powers of our human hearts, aided by divine grace, thus manifestly teach that acts of love for God because He is good are easy for the multitudes. And if they are easy, they must necessarily have been not rare but common.

The thrifty New York farmer does not cover his broad acres with fig-, orange-, and lemon-trees or with banana-plants or palm-trees; but rather with peach-, pear-, and apple-trees, which are suited to his soil and climate and from which he

can normally gather an abundance of fruits. Human souls are the soil of God's garden and heaven-sent graces are its climate, light, heat, dew, and rain. The Divine Gardener valued a tree by its fruits and put His curse on the fig-tree that was barren. As we have seen, the trees in the garden of the soul are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, and faith, hope, and charity. Now the Holy Spirit and the Church, in the Psalms, devote singular care to the tree of charity, or love for God for His own sake and love for our neighbor for God's sake, and thus show that they there expect from this tree not mere barren sentiment, but the fruit of practical virtues, of keeping the commandments, and they expect this fruit in the multitude of Hebrew and Christian souls with their nature and their graces such as they are.

May those who recite some of the Psalms every day be helped by the truths of this chapter to love to sing in their hearts these praiseful prayers and prayerful praises written by the sweetest of all singers to make love for God and our neighbor easy and common!

## CHAPTER XIX

### *THE BREVIARY AND MISSAL CONTAIN MANY ACTS OF LOVE. THE CHURCH SUPPOSES THAT THESE ACTS CAN BE MADE BY THE MULTITUDE*

**T**HE line of argument which has been pursued on the Psalms may be fittingly applied also to the Breviary, the Missal, and the "Raccolta," or collection of prayers approved and indulgenced by the Church for her faithful people, and, indeed, to the ordinary prayer-books and to the many pious practices for the multitude of her children. These are all full of acts of love for God above all things for His own sake and of acts of perfect contrition. If such acts are so hard as to be rare and are not so easy as to be common, how much precious time and energy have been wasted on barren sentiment by the billions of Catholic souls in the centuries of Christianity, and that under the guidance of the Church, which has directed their time and energy to be thus spent, and which would be not wise but foolish.

The greater part of the Breviary consists of the Psalms, of which we have already treated. But the other parts too are full of acts of explicit love for God or of acts which can not exist without love for God for His own sake.

At the beginning of the hours and often in their course we find the "Pater," the "Ave," the "Credo." As has been seen above, the "Pater" has love not only in its beginning but all through it and the "Credo" presents to the mind the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost as infinitely lovable and most loving toward us.

With the angelic reverence of the Archangel Gabriel, the "Ave" joys in the lovable beauties and glories of Mary full of grace, supremely favored by the Lord's singular love for her and called "blessed among women" by all generations, and it joys also in the lovable beauties and glories of the fruit of her womb, Jesus, our loving God and Saviour. Here is an act of purest, most disinterested affection for Jesus and Mary, for Mary with Jesus and for the sake of Jesus. In the "Holy

Mary," the petition for pardon and salvation is an act of hope, but of hope so simple and confiding that it can spring only from the preceding pure love for Jesus and for His Mother and ours.

Nearly all of the hours begin with the prayer for help to pray. "O God, come down to my assistance. O Lord, make haste to help me." These words are the first verse of Psalm lxix. The following are the remaining verses:

"Let them be confounded and ashamed that seek my soul.

"Let them be turned backward and blush for shame, that desire evils to me.

"Let them be presently turned away blushing for shame, that say to me, 'Tis well, 'tis well.

"Let all that seek Thee rejoice and be glad in Thee. And let such as love Thy salvation say always: The Lord be magnified.

"But I am needy and poor; O God, help me.

"Thou art my helper and my deliverer; O Lord, make no delay."

In this psalm what pure love for God for His own sake and what pure love for our neighbor for God's sake! How identical its sentiment with the angelic "Glory to God and peace to man." Indeed, love alone can inspire the hope of the "Deus in adjutorium." Only he who is conscious that he is God's friend and that God is his Friend can thus simply and familiarly bid the Almighty to come and help (here and now) and to be quick and hurry and make no delay.

The "Deus in adjutorium" is similar to the "Veni, Sancte Spiritus"—"Come, O Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and kindle in them the fire of Thy love." This is a Breviary prayer for the clergy, but it is also most frequently said at the opening of pious meetings of the people, in all of whose hearts the Church thus supposes the fire of divine love easy to be kindled.

The respective canticles for Matins, Lauds, Vespers and Compline are the "Te Deum," the "Benedictus," the "Magnificat," and the "Nunc Dimittis." Thus the Church supposes that it is easy and common for ordinary hearts to be fully responsive to these loving strains of Ambrose, Augustine, Zachary, Mary, and Simeon.

A venerable, apostolic priest, who was always religiously gay and gaily religious, whenever asked the time of day,

before taking out his watch always answered, "It is time to love the good God." The Breviary is more solemnly religious, but it, too, when asked the time of day or week or month or season or year, answers that it is time to love the good God. It follows the ancient Roman method and divides the solar day of 24 hours into eight watches or periods of, more or less, three hours each. Matins are divided into three nocturns or night-watches ending respectively about 9, 12, and 3 o'clock at night. Lauds are at dawn. Prime, Terce, Sext, None, the four day hours, are respectively about 6, 9, 12, and 3 o'clock in the daytime. Vespers are about 6 P.M. and Compline at bedtime. For each one of these hours, the Breviary has many acts of love and thus says to us that every hour of the night and day is time to love God.

The following is the Matin hymn for Sunday from the octave of Pentecost to the first Sunday of October:

"Let us arise and watch by night  
And meditate always;  
And chant as in our Maker's sight  
United hymns of *praise*.

"So singing with the *saints in bliss*,  
With them we may attain  
Life everlasting after this,  
And heaven for earthly pain."

For each of the other days of the week there is a similar Matin hymn calling us to watch and pray and lovingly praise God.

In religious communities it is a time-honored custom for the official called the "*excitator*" or "awakener," after ringing the bell for rising from sleep, to knock at each door and cry out "*Benedicamus Domino*" or "*Laudetur Jesus Christus*"—"Let us bless the Lord," or "Praised be Jesus Christ," and the Religious who is in bed responds, "*Deo gratias*" or "*In sæcula sæculorum*"—"Thanks be to God" or "Forever and ever."

In Catholic colleges it is, or used to be, the practice to begin morning prayers with the following words:

"Blessed be the holy and undivided Trinity now and forevermore. Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts, the heavens and the earth are



full of Thy Glory. Glory be to the Father, Glory be to the Son, Glory be to the Holy Ghost. Great God, the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, I prostrate myself before Thee. With all the angels and saints, I adore Thee. I acknowledge Thee to be my Creator and Sovereign Lord, my first beginning and my last end. I render to Thee the homage of my being and life. I submit myself to Thy holy will and I devote myself to Thy divine service this day and forever."

Then there follows a prayer which we have already cited, in which we resolve to lovingly imitate during the day the adorable Jesus, the divine model of that perfection to which we should all aspire. Nowadays, the pious Catholic commonly makes the morning offering to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This is love both affectionate and effective as soon as we awake from sleep.

The hymn of Matins is preceded by Psalm xciv, "*Venite exultemus.*"

"Come let us praise the Lord with joy, let us joyfully sing to God our Saviour.

"Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; and make a joyful noise to Him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

"For in His hand are all the ends of the earth: and the heights of the mountains are His.

"For the sea is His and He made it and His hands formed the dry land. Come let us adore and fall down: and weep before the Lord that made us. For He is the Lord our God: and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand, etc."

Before the beginning of this psalm and after each one of its verses, there is chanted or recited the whole or half of the "Invitatorium," which varies with the day of the week or with the special feast. The one for the Lord's Day is: "Let us adore the Lord, for He made us." The Invitatorium for each day of the week is similar to that of Sunday. For feasts of angels or saints it invites to come and adore the King of Angels, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins, etc. For feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary it is: "Holy Virgin Mary, Mother of God, pray for us." For the dedication of a church it is: "Holiness becometh God's house, her Spouse Christ let us adore." For the office of the dead it is, "The King to whom all things live, come let us adore."

We find the following lines in the respective Matin hymns:

For the Apostles :

“Theirs was the saint’s high faith  
And quenchless hope’s pure glow,  
And perfect *charity* which laid  
The world’s fell tyrant low.”

For feasts of One Martyr :

“O God, of Thy soldiers  
The Portion and Crown,  
Spare Thy people who hymn  
The praise of the blest.”

For feasts of Many Martyrs :

“Those whom the senseless world abhorred  
Who cast the world aside,  
Deemed fruitless, worthless for the sake  
Of Christ, their Lord and Guide.”

For feasts of Confessors :

“This is the day when Jesus’ true Confessor  
Whose happy festal day His people keep  
Hasting with joy to dwell with Him the blesser,  
Climbed heaven’s steep.”

The following is from the hymn for Virgins at Lauds :

“Amongst the lilies Thou dost feed  
With Virgin choirs accompanied  
With glory decked, the spotless brides  
Whose bridal gifts Thy love provides.

“They, wheresoe’er Thy footsteps bend  
With hymns and praises still attend;  
In blessed troops they follow Thee  
With dance and song and melody.”

In the Matin hymn for feasts of the B. V. M. :

“The God whose will by moon and sun  
And all things in due course, is done,  
Is borne upon a maiden’s breast  
By fullest heavenly grace possessed.”

For the dedication of a church :

“Blessed City, Heavenly Salem,  
Vision dear of peace and love,  
Who, of living stones upbuilt,  
Art the joy of heaven above,  
And with angel cohorts circled,  
As a bride to earth doth move.”

The following is the hymn of Lauds for Friday :

“Glory of the eternal heaven,  
Blessed Hope to mortals given,  
Of the Almighty Only Son,  
And the Virgin’s Holy One;  
Raise us, Lord, and we shall rise  
In a sober mood,  
And a zeal which glorifies  
Thee from gratitude.

“Now the day-star keenly glancing  
Tells us of the sun’s advancing;  
While the unhealthy shades decline,  
Rise within us, Light Divine!  
Rise, and risen, go not hence,  
Stay and make us bright,  
Streaming through each cleansed sense,  
On the outward sight.

“Then the root of faith shall spread  
In the heart new fashioned,  
Gladsome hope shall spring above,  
And shall bear the fruit of love.”

The hymn of Prime when the orb of day is now risen, prays that all through the day we may stay pure from the various sins, so that when night returns we may be unspotted by the world and sing glory to God.

The hymn for Terce, the hour when the Holy Ghost filled the apostles, prays that we now may be totally filled with the Holy Spirit, that its fire of love may flame forth and that our ardor may enkindle our neighbor.

At Sext, or the sixth hour, corresponding to our 12 M., God, Who illumines the morn with splendor and the noon with fires, is begged to extinguish all unholy flames of strife and to dispel all noxious heat of soul and to give health to our bodies and true peace to our hearts.

At None, or the ninth hour, corresponding to our 3 P.M., the Lord is portrayed as the unmoved mover of the sun and its varying light and is begged to grant us at eve a light by which life may never fail, but as a reward for a holy death there may be instantly given us perennial glory.

The following is the hymn for Vespers on Saturday:

"The red sun is gone,  
Thou light of the heart,  
Blessed Three, Holy One,  
To Thy servants, a sun  
Everlasting impart.  
There were Lauds in the morn,  
Here are Vespers at even;  
O may we adorn  
Thy Temple, new born,  
With our voices in heaven."

The following is the beginning of the hymn for Compline:

"Now that the daylight dies away,  
By all thy grace and love,  
Thee, Maker of the world, we pray  
To watch our bed above."

This is followed by what is called the Chapter. It is from Jer. xiv. 9:

"Thou, O Lord, art in us and Thy holy name has been invoked upon us. Do not abandon us, O Lord, our God."

And this chapter is followed by the responsory:

"Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. Thou hast redeemed us, O Lord, God of truth. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. Guard us, O Lord, as the apple of Thine eye. Under the shadow of Thy wings protect us."

After both Lauds and Compline there is said according to the season one of the Anthems to Mary, the "Alma Redemptioris," the "Ave Regina," the "Regina Cœli," or the "Salve Regina," with its corresponding Verse and Response and Collect. And here there are faith and hope and love singularly tender.

In these hymns we see the Blessed Mother, the Church and the saints placed before us as lovable and loving examples, to be admired and imitated.

Mary is the lovable and loving Mother of God and of Man.

The Church and the Virgins are the lovable and loving brides of Christ.

The apostles are Our Lord's closest friends. He confides to them all His secrets of sacred truth on which they found the Church. And out of love for Him they love to feed all

His sheep and lambs for whom, as the Good Shepherd, He gave His life. And the apostolic spirit conspicuously exemplifies His own commandment that we love one another as He loved us.

The martyrs are His lovingly loyal soldiers. "They have followed the footsteps of Christ and for His love have shed their blood."

The confessors are those who have confessed Him before earth and heaven; not, indeed, by dying a bloody death for His cause, but by living a holy life and imitating His life and its virtues. They are likened to the wise man who built his house on Christ as a rock. They hear from Him the sentence:

"Well done, good and faithful servant, since thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will place thee over many. Enter into the joy of thy Lord."

The Offices of the solemnities of the Blessed Trinity and of the coming of the Spirit of Love are replete with love most beautiful and sublime.

How many days are sacred to various mysteries in the life of our Divine Lord and of His Blessed Mother! And scarcely a line of these sweet Offices can be said rightly without true love for Jesus and Mary in our hearts.

In the back of the Breviary we find the Litany of the Saints with the numerous collects after it. This Litany is said by all the people on certain days of the year, and by some religious communities every night. With some modifications it is also said near the death-bed. As is well known and all recognize, these petitions made in the holy company of the angels and saints, special friends of God, contain such a degree of confiding hope as can not exist without love.

Near the same place we read the full grace before and after meals. We make the following extracts from it:

"The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord, and Thou givest them their food in due season."

"Thou openest Thy hand and fillest all living things with plenteousness."

"Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bountiful hands, through Christ our Lord."

"May the King of eternal glory make us partakers of His table in heaven."

"We give Thee thanks, O Almighty God, for these and all Thy benefits."

"May it please Thee, O Lord, to reward with eternal life all those who do good to us, for Thy name's sake."

"The poor shall eat and be sated and they shall praise the Lord that seek Him. Their heart shall live forever."

"May the King of eternal glory bring us to the supper of eternal life."

"He hath made a memorial of His wonderful works. The Lord is gracious and full of compassion. He hath given food to them that fear Him."

"He hath dispersed, He hath given to the poor. His righteousness endureth forever. I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall ever be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord. The humble shall hear thereof and be glad. Magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt His name together."

"Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and for evermore."

These prayers are largely from the Psalms. They are interspersed with frequent Kyries, Glorias, and Paters. Here the Church manifestly supposes that whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, we are easily capable of doing it actually for the glory of God, that we can easily make true acts of love before sitting down at the table and after rising up from it, at dinner and supper time.

Immediately after the grace we read the prayers for starting on a journey, from which we make these extracts:

"May the Lord, the Almighty and Merciful, lead us." The canticle, Benedictus and the Pater are then recited . . .

"Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil.

"O Thou, my God, save Thy servants that trust in Thee.

"O Lord, send us help from Thy sanctuary and strengthen us out of Zion.

"Lord, be Thou unto us a tower of strength in the face of the enemy.

"Blessed be the Lord daily. The God of our salvation maketh our way prosperous."

"Graciously hear our supplication, O Lord, we beseech Thee, and order the goings of Thy servants in the safe path that leadeth unto salvation in Thee, that amidst all the manifold changes of this life's pilgrimage, Thy shield may never cease from us . . . Let us proceed in peace, in the name of the Lord."

Here again we find confidingness such as conscious love alone can inspire.

If any reader has at hand a copy of the Roman Ritual we

beg him to peruse there the Church's prayers for grooms and brides; for mothers before or after childbirth, for children who are blessed or dedicated or are sick, for the dying and the dead, for the blessing of throats, of houses, of various pious objects, for the administration of the sacraments, for clothing with the scapular, etc., etc. He will find in every one of these prayers designed for various stages and eventualities of life the same loving spirit of children in which we cry out "Abba"—"Father."

In the Ritual, Breviary, and Missal there are numerous Collects or "*Oremuses*." Not one will be found addressed to God as an angry judge. We have not been able to find a single one in which there does not appear the idea of the divine mercy piously invoked. There God is called by the sweetest and most affectionate names. The following are some of their beginnings:

"O most tender Father, Almighty and Merciful Lord, O God our Saviour;"

"Look propitiously, O Lord; O God who beholdest that we confide in no action of ours;"

"O God, the strength of those who hope in Thee;"

"O God, of whose mercy there is no counting and of whose goodness the treasure is infinite;"

"Thy ineffable mercy, O Lord, clemently show to us;"

"O God, who permittest not any one hoping in Thee to be afflicted too much;"

"O God, who desirest not the death of sinners but their repentance."

The endings of the "*Oremuses*" are even more manifestly and uniformly loving than their beginnings. The reader will recognize the truth of this by recalling the common ending of these petitions,

" . . . through Our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Host through all the ages of ages."

Adolph Harnack writes, in "*Lehrbuch der Dogmenschichte*," Vol. XIII, page 729:

"Living faith in God, who cries out through Christ to the poor soul: 'I am thy salvation,' '*salus tua ego sum*,' the full abandonment of security in the thought that God is the being to whom we can confide ourselves . . . such was the message of Luther to Christendom."

Poor Luther repeatedly confessed that he never loved God above all things for His own sake and repeatedly maintained

that no one else ever did and that this is impossible on earth for any one of the race of fallen man. His message was that of salvation by faith without love, and even without the resolve to keep the commandments so as to avoid mortal sin, and even without any good works, which faith St. James says is dead. Here Luther differed from that apostle and banished his epistle from the Bible. The sweet message of God crying out through Christ to the poor soul "*salus tua ego sum*"—"I am thy salvation," was written thousands of years before Luther by the Psalmist in Psalm xxxiv. 3, "Say to my soul I am thy salvation." The same message was written in a century before Luther's by Thomas à Kempis in the Imitation of Christ, Book III, chapter 1. "Thus saith thy beloved, I am thy salvation, thy peace and thy life." It was written by the One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church in the above cited "*Oremuses*" and in countless other prayers hallowed by the sacred lips of saints of the centuries of Christianity. The fine phrase of Harnack claiming the first delivery of this sweet message for Martin Luther is more hysterical than historical. Luther, Calvin, and their disciples Baius, Jansenius and Quesnel delivered to the world not God's or Christ's but their own message about the conception of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost and the soul and grace and the act of love. For him who accepts their message and is logically consistent, hate for God and our neighbor is not only easy but necessary and love is not only hard but impossible, and love alone can fill the soul with the sweets of full confidence, security, joy, and peace.

The liturgy referring to the Eucharist, to Mass, Communion, and Benediction, to the Emanuel, Our Lord with us, in body, blood, soul, and divinity, truly, really substantially present, to offer Himself to His Father as our victim, to give Himself to us as our food, to be adored and loved by us and to personally pour out His blessings on our souls, this part of the liturgy is that which most touchingly presents to us God as lovable and loving and which most explicitly asks us to make deep and tender and frequent acts of pure love for Him.

As we have seen, how much love there is in the prayers of the Breviary and Ritual. If possible, there is still more in the Missal. Every reader is familiar with the prayers of the



Ordinary of the Mass. We have seen how much love there is in the Collects. For one Collect in the Office of the day there are three in the corresponding Mass. In it the selections from the Gospels and Epistles vary. They most frequently place before us in inspired words, examples, motives and exhortations of love.

The prayers for putting on each of the sacred vestments and for approaching the altar of the Lord are mainly confessions of guilt and petitions to the divine mercy for cleanness of body and soul. But in these vesting prayers, and in the Psalm "*Judica me Deus*," and in the "Confiteor," and in the subsequent prayers, whether loud or whispered, and in the affectionate kissing of the altar, what confidingness, what spurning of sadness from the soul, what hope in God, the salvation of our countenance, what joy as of youth in approaching his altar and what glorifying of Him, what love! The three "Kyries" to the Father, the three "Christes" to the Son, and the three "Kyries" to the Holy Spirit, not to speak of frequent signs of the cross, are so many ejaculations of simple, loving hope.

The "Gloria" begins with the notes of pure love for God and man intoned by the angels at Bethlehem. Every clause of this rhapsody is either explicit love or supposes it.

We have already seen how the "Credo's" every article of faith is a root from which there naturally spring forth in the soul the blossom of hope and the fruit of love.

As we see from the titles at their head, the Prefaces are for the Nativity of Our Lord, for His Epiphany, for Lent, for Masses of the Cross and the Passion, for Easter, for the Ascension, for Pentecost, for the feast of the Most Holy Trinity and for the Sundays through the year, for the feasts and Votive Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary, for feasts of the Apostles and for the other feasts and week-days through the year. The soul is tuned to sing the Preface by preludes of short aspirations.

"The Lord be with you. And with thy spirit."

This versicle of the priest and this response of the people constantly recur. They can not be said rightly without divine and fraternal charity in the heart.

"Let us lift up our hearts. We have them lifted up to the Lord."

This act of recollection of the presence of God is childlike in its simplicity and heartiness.

"Let us give thanks to the Lord Our God. It is worthy and just."

Here are thanks that look at gifts, but much more at the great and kind giver, all lovable, most loving, most close kin to us. Such thanks are the same as love, at least in practice, if not in strict theory. This is manifest from what follows:

"Indeed it is worthy and just, equitable and salutary for us to always and everywhere give thanks to Thee, Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God."

This is the beginning of all the Prefaces except two. That of Easter, instead of thanking with explicit love, glorifies the Lord on the day when Christ our Pasch was immolated:

"For He is truly the Lamb who took away the sins of the world, who by dying destroyed our death and by rising repaired our life."

In the Preface of the Apostles:

"It is just and worthy and equitable and wholesome to suppliantly beseech Thee, O Lord, O Eternal Shepherd, that Thou desert not Thy flock but through Thy blessed apostles guard it by Thy continuous protection."

Here our Lord is called the lovable and loving names "Our Lamb of God" and "Our Good Shepherd." Why is it truly worthy and just, equitable, and salutary for us always and everywhere to give thanks to Thee, O Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God? It is for reasons varying with the season:

"Because through the mystery of the Incarnate Word a new light of Thy brightness has flashed in the eyes of our soul, so that while we know God visibly, through Him we may be rapt to the love of things invisible."

"Because when Thy Only-Begotten hath appeared in the substance of our mortality, He hath repaired us by a new light of His own immortality."

"Because by corporal fasting thou dost repress vices, elevate the mind, lavish virtues and rewards, through Christ Our Lord."

"Because Thou hast constituted the salvation of the human race in the wood of the cross, that whence death arose thence life might rise again and He who in the wood conquered, in the wood also might be conquered."

"It is meet to give thanks to Thee through Christ Our Lord, who after His resurrection, manifestly appeared to all His disciples and

while they were looking on was elevated into heaven that He might bestow on us to be sharers of His own divinity."

"Through Christ Our Lord, who ascending above all the heavens and sitting at Thy right hand to-day poured forth the promised Holy Spirit on sons of adoption. Wherefore the whole world in the orb of the earth with profuse joys doth exult. And also the supernal virtues and the angelic host together chime the hymn of Thy glory, saying, etc."

The Preface for the Trinity and the Lord's days throughout the year adds as reason for thanksgiving the truths of the divine unity and trinity. The Preface of the Blessed Virgin Mary, after saying that it is worthy and just, etc., to give thanks to Thee, adds "and to praise, bless and glorify Thee on the feast of blessed Mary ever Virgin, who both conceived Thy Only-Begotten by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit and the Glory of virginity remaining, poured forth to the world the Eternal Light, Jesus Christ Our Lord, through whom," etc.

In each Preface thanks are seen to be followed by explicit pure love. Each one closes:

"With the hymn of Thy glory in union with the choirs of angels in heaven saying without ceasing: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Full are the heavens and the earth of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest."

Mozart said that he would be willing to tear up all his musical compositions if he could write one melody equal to the tune of the Preface. In his judgment and that of many other great composers and critics this tune even equals the words in simple beauty and sublimity. It is singularly suited to them and strongly aids the soul to elicit their acts of thanks and love.

The Preface is followed by the Canon, which, like the Lord's Prayer, is all addressed to God as a most kind Father ("*Te igitur clementissime Pater.*") and is everywhere pervaded with the confiding and loving spirit of children.

The "Pater Noster" is preceded by a most humble and yet most confiding prelude.

Nothing could be fuller of the reverence of hopeful love than the "Agnus Dei" and the "Domine, non sum dignus," and the other prayers referring to the reception of the heavenly

bread and the chalice of salvation and to the communion of the people.

At the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament we constantly hear the hymns, "O Salutaris" and "Tantum Ergo." Perhaps we do not always pay attention to the meaning of the Latin words, which some of us may have never distinctly understood. It is impossible for any one to do full justice in an English version to the melodious Latin rhythm or rhymes of the Angel of the Schools, who was like an angel not only in his lucid reasoning but also in his sweet singing. However, our readers may be pleased to see the full hymns in English. Thus many may for the first time realize how much love is expected by the Church in those who assist at Benediction:

THE VERBUM SUPERNUM PRODIENS

"The Word of God proceeding forth,  
Yet leaving not the Father's side,  
And going to His work on earth,  
Had reached at length life's eventide.

"By a disciple to be given  
To rivals for His Blood athirst,  
Himself, the very Bread of heaven,  
He gave to His disciples first.

"He gave Himself in either kind;  
His Precious Flesh, His Precious Blood;  
Of flesh and blood is man combined,  
And He of man would be the Food.

"In Birth, man's Fellow-man was He;  
His Meat while sitting at the Board;  
He died, his Ransomer to be;  
He reigns, to be his Great Reward.

"O saving victim, slain to bless!  
Who openest heaven's bright gates to all,  
The attacks of many a foe oppress;  
Give strength in strife, and help in fall.

"To God, the Three in One, ascend  
All thanks and praise for evermore,  
He grant the life that shall not end,  
Upon the heavenly country's shore. Amen."

## THE PANGE LINGUA

- "Of the glorious Body telling,  
 O my tongue, its mystery sing;  
 And the Blood, all price excelling,  
 Which for this world's ransoming  
 In a noble womb once dwelling  
 He shed forth, the Gentiles' King.
- "Given for us, for us descending  
 Of a Virgin to proceed,  
 Man with man in converse blending,  
 Scattered He the Gospel seed;  
 Till His sojourn drew to ending  
 Which He closed in wondrous deed.
- "At the Last Great Supper seated  
 Circled by His brethren's band,  
 All the Law required, completed  
 In the Feast its statutes planned,  
 To the twelve, Himself He meted  
 For their Food, with His own Hand.
- "Word made Flesh, by Word He maketh  
 Very bread His Flesh to be;  
 Man for wine Christ's Blood partaketh;  
 And if senses fail to see,  
 Faith alone the true heart waketh  
 To behold the Mystery.
- "Therefore, we, before it bending,  
 This great Sacrament adore:  
 Types and shadows have their ending  
 In the new rite evermore:  
 Faith our outward sense amending  
 Maketh good defects before.
- "Honor, laud, and praise addressing  
 To the Father and the Son,  
 Might ascribe we, virtue, blessing,  
 And eternal benison:  
 Holy Ghost from Both progressing  
 Equal laud to Thee be done. Amen."

Here Our Lord as wondrously lovable and loving, vividly imprinted on the mind, all but forces the soul to burst forth in a return of loving thanks and praises.

The aspirations after Mass and Benediction, "Most Sacred Heart of Jesus have mercy on us." "Blessed be God, etc.," are comparatively modern. Started by Rome, the Mother and Head of all the Churches of the world, they are now practised in the whole Catholic universe. They are acts of purest benevolence to God and are striking object-lessons of Rome's confidence in the powers of our generation to easily elicit acts of unselfish divine charity.

In bringing this chapter to a close we repeat again God's words to His people spoken through Moses in Deuteronomy. That last of the five books of the Law treats mainly of the greatest and first commandment. In one of its last chapters the greatest of the prophets says:

"Set your hearts on all the words which I testify to you this day, which you shall command your children to observe and to do and to fulfil all that is written in this law. For they are not commanded you in vain, but that every one may live in them and that doing them you may continue a long time in the land whither you are going over the Jordan to possess it." (Deut. xxxii. 46.)

"This commandment [of love] that I command thee this day is not above thee nor far off from thee nor is it in heaven that thou shouldst say, Which of us can go up into heaven to bring it unto us and we may hear and fulfil it in work? Nor is it beyond the sea that thou mayst excuse thyself and say, Which of us can cross the sea and bring it unto us that we may hear and do that which is commanded? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart that thou mayest do it. . . . That thou mayest love the Lord thy God." (Deut. xxx. 11.)

In Deut. v. 10, he had introduced God, saying:

"I am the Lord thy God . . . showing mercy unto many thousands to them that love Me and keep My commandments."

And in Deut. vi. 4, sq., he had proclaimed this commandment:

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole strength." And He immediately added: "And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt tell them to thy children, and thou shalt meditate upon them sitting in thy house, and walking on thy journey, sleeping, and rising and thou shalt bind them as a sign on thy hand and they shall be and shall move between thy eyes. And thou shalt write them in the entry and on the doors of thy house."

The Holy Spirit gave the Psalms with their many acts of love to be said by all the children of the Synagogue and of the Church not only with their lips but also in their hearts. Our Lord gave the Our Father as a form of prayer for all. According to the mind of the Church, as seen in her Breviary and Missal and in all the rest of her Liturgy, every hour of every day of every month of every year is time for her children to love God. The Holy Ghost, Our Lord, and the Church are not foolish. Therefore love for God is easy for man, as he is aided by the graces he has.

## CHAPTER XX

*ACTS OF LOVE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN STRICTLY COMMANDED BY OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN TO EVERY ONE OF HIS CHILDREN ON EARTH. THEY ARE THENCE SEEN TO BE EASY*

**T**HE patriarchs foreshadowed the Messiah and the prophets foretold Him, but St. John the Baptist pointed out the Lamb of God as present and seen by the eye. In a way somewhat similar, while other chapters infer the truth of our main proposition more or less immediately from the Holy Scriptures, this chapter on the greatest and first commandment places our finger on this truth as seen in the express words of Inspiration.

Here the arguing is like that which puts two and two together and concludes that they make four, and we see our truth so explicitly affirmed in Holy Writ, that we know it without even any such rudimentary reasoning.

The present proof may be thus outlined: *No act always commanded by God to all is hard. But the act of love has ever been commanded by God to all. Therefore it is not hard.*

We will now hear the word of God explicitly telling us not only each one of those two premises but also that conclusion.

Calvin and Luther and their disciples taught that God commands impossibilities, and that the fulfilment of the greatest and first commandment in particular is impossible for any one. For this they were condemned in the Sixth Session of the Council of Trent, Canon 18:

“If any one saith that the commandments of God are, even for one that is justified and constituted in grace, impossible to keep, let him be anathema.”

This same error is contained in the following fifty-fourth proposition of Baius, which was condemned by the Holy See for the first time in the year 1567:

“This definitive teaching that God has commanded nothing impossible to men, is falsely attributed to Augustine, since it is the teaching of Pelagius.”



We see the same error in the following first of the celebrated five propositions of Jansenius, which were condemned by the Holy See for the first time in the year 1653 :

“Some precepts of God, to men just, willing and trying, according to the present powers which they have, are impossible; there is also lacking to them the grace by which they may be made possible.”

We see the same error condemned by the Holy See in the year 1794. The following is the nineteenth paragraph of the Bull of Pius VI, on the errors of the pseudo-synod of Pistoia :

“Likewise as to the things which it adds, that man, under the law, being impotent to observe it, became a prevaricator, not indeed by the fault of the law which was most holy, but by the fault of man, who under the law without grace became more and more a prevaricator; and as to what it superadds, that the law, if it did not heal the heart of man, effected that he knew his evils and being convinced of his infirmity desired the grace of the mediator; in as far as it hints in general that man became a prevaricator by the inobservance of the law which he was impotent to observe, as if He who is just could have commanded something impossible, or as if He who is paternally loving will condemn man for that which he has been unable to avoid, is (from St. Cæsarius, serm. 73, in the appendix of St. Augustine serm. 173, Maurine edition; from St. Augustine on nature and grace, c. 43, on grace and free will, c. 16, Exposition of Psalm lvi. n. 1) false, scandalous, impious, condemned in Baius.”

According to these errors of Luther, Calvin, Baius, Jansenius and their disciples, God is not a loving Father, or even a just Master and Judge, but more exacting than the cruel taskmasters placed over the children of Israel to oppress and persecute them, by the Pharaoh who knew not Joseph. Indeed, the being created by their fevered brains is not Our Father in heaven, but a Satan from hell full of hate, envy, and cruelty toward man.

The Church in condemning these errors teaches that none of God's commands is impossible, but in explaining her reasons for these condemnations she goes further and teaches that each one of God's commands is easy. We have just seen Pius VI, showing the cause of God not being able to impose impossibilities on man, to be that He is not only just but loving, loving like a tender Father, *pius*.

Let us hear the Council of Trent in its decree explaining its above cited canon :

"But no one, how much soever justified, ought to think himself exempt from the observance of the commandments.

"No one ought to make use of that rash saying prohibited by the Fathers under an anathema—that the observance of the commandments of God is impossible for one that is justified. For God commands not impossibilities; but by commanding both admonishes thee to do what thou art able and to pray for what thou art not able and aids thee that thou mayst be able (St. Augustine on nature and grace c. 43); whose commandments are not heavy (1 John v. 3); whose yoke is sweet and whose burden light (Matt. xi. 30). For whoso are the sons of God, love Christ, but they who love Him keep His commandments, as He Himself testifies (John xiv. 15)."

This decree scarcely needs any comment. To prove that the divine commands are possible, the Council shows that they are even easy with the aid of the grace which is given to all who try and ask. Its proofs that they are easy are the words of St. John and of Our Lord Himself; namely, God's commands are not heavy, they are a yoke that is sweet and a burden that is light. Each of these inspired phrases clearly affirms that all or any of the things commanded by God is easy. Thus it is the mind of the loving Jesus and of the disciple whom He loved, that the fact of a thing being a divine command shows it to be not only possible but easy.

In the chapter on the consensus of the theologians, we heard, among others, Canon Berardi and Cardinal Billot affirming as unquestionable, that the act of love must be something easy *because* it is of universal precept, is commanded without exception to all men as they are, with the ignorance and weakness which are the common rule in the masses of men of all times and places. They show that it is easy *from the fact* that the loving heavenly Father has imposed it as a yoke and burden, as a strict precept binding under pain of mortal sin, and has thus imposed it on every one who has the use of reason, from Adam till the day of judgment.

Luther, Calvin, Baius, Jansenius, and their disciples held: "*a præcepto ad posse non valet illatio*," from the fact of God commanding an act to man, there is no valid inference to the possibility of man performing that act. Before, during, and since the time of those innovators "*a præcepto ad posse valet illatio*" has ever been accepted as an axiom by Catholic scholars. The above cited saying of St. Augustine has ever

been regarded as fundamental and self-evident. The opposite assertion has ever been looked on as a gratuitous and rash saying prohibited by the Fathers under an anathema. Thus, as has been said, St. Jerome is cited and followed by St. Thomas and all Catholic theologians in his well-known saying, "Cursed the man who saith that God commands impossibilities."

As we have seen, the teaching of the pseudo-synod of Pistoia that God commanded impossibilities, and made the non-accomplishment of impossibilities an offense in man and damned him for what he could not avoid, is stigmatized by Pius VI as false, scandalous, and impious and as condemned by the Holy See in the case of Baius.

How is it scandalous, a stumbling-block to souls? If men believe that they can not possibly keep all the commandments or some one of them in particular, they will not try to do so, will consider it absurd to try. If they believe it is impossible for them to please a hard and cruel master, they will not try to please him. This scandalous belief will block every effort of the will to fly, run, walk, or even make one step, in the way of the divine commandments. It will, if consistent, involve absolute immorality and even absolute immoralism, will cut out the roots not only of all practice of morality but also of all belief in morality or moral principle. There can be no sin if there is no free will.

How is this teaching impious? Any superior by commanding his inferior to perform an act, virtually affirms that this act is possible. This teaching thus represents the All-truthful as acting a lie.

Moreover, it represents the All-Holy God as the responsible cause of all the crimes committed by the members of the human race, as equally the author of the conversion of Paul and of the treason of Judas, according to these words of Luther. What could be more absurdly blasphemous against Infinite Sanctity?

It represents God as unreasonable, as tyrannically and cruelly unjust to man and blasphemes His Justice, which can not require us to do what is above our strength and can not punish us for doing that to which we were necessitated, for not avoiding that which we could not avoid.

Above all, it blasphemes His Mercy, which is beyond all His works, and His Benignity or Goodness toward us, which is greater than that of any human father or mother. His Mercy, Benignity, and Goodness, as His Wisdom chooses to exercise them, cause the Psalmist to sing: "*suavis Dominus universis et miserationes ejus super omnia opera ejus.*" (Ps. cxliv. 9.) They cause God to be a Ruler or Lord sweet to all and cause His mercies to be above all His works. And such a Ruler's commands must be not heavy and His yoke must be sweet and His burden must be light.

Here there may occur to the reader's mind the following objection: God made the many ceremonial and judicial statutes of His chosen people, and St. Paul declares that these were a yoke which neither his generation nor their ancestors could bear.

We may waive this objection. We may grant both that God made these statutes and that they were a heavy yoke, and deny that anything follows against the truth of the proposition, "acts commanded by God to *all* men of *all* times are not hard but easy." Those statutes were made by God for only a small fraction of the human race and for only one period of the history of that small fraction. They were never imposed on the whole human race, were never an obligation on every individual of the human race. They did not exist even for the Hebrew race before Abraham or Moses and the existence of their obligation ceased even for the Hebrew race from the day of the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles.

Monarchs or governments may be tender and fatherly and even motherly in the spirit of their laws and may yet use seemingly severe measures at certain times of extraordinary conditions. They may then suspend *habeas corpus*, etc., and proclaim martial law. The head of a family may be most fatherly toward all living under his roof and authority. He may make regulations which are few and simple for his younger and his older children, and regulations which are many and stern for his youthful sons and daughters whose reason is weak and whose passions are violent and whose companions are evil. St. Thomas compares the times from Adam to Moses, from Moses to Christ, from Christ to the

end of the world, to the infancy, the youth and the maturity of the human race. As is easily understood, the Hebrew nation having long lived in slavery in Egypt and being ever surrounded by idolatrous and immoral peoples needed that multitude of outward observances made by God Himself to segregate them from evil companions and guard them against constant imminent temptations to idolatry and its degrading immoral abominations.

All canonists proclaim as an axiom the principle that the Catholic Church in making her laws and in interpreting and applying them, is a tender mother. They ever call her "*pia Mater Ecclesia*"—"tender Mother Church." In her Religious Orders or Congregations the number of rules and regulations is greater in proportion to the rank and power of the personage, and according as he is a private, a subordinate official, a rector, a provincial, or a general. There is the same gradation of more numerous regulations for the ordinary faithful, for the parish priests, the bishops, the archbishops, the cardinals, the Supreme Pontiff. There are fewer and easier regulations for the very young or the very aged than for the mature and strong among the simple faithful.

Suppose we know that the Church has commanded something to be done by all the faithful, even the very young and the very aged. By the fact itself we know that this particular thing is easy. We say we know it *must* be easy from the very fact that it is a strict command under pain of mortal sin by tender Mother Church to every one of her children. Beforehand we know it *must* be so, and we look in the catechism and find it so. There we see that the only obligations imposed by the Church in her positive precepts or statutes on all who have the use of reason and even on the very young or aged are the following: To hear Mass on Sundays and holy-days of obligation, to abstain on Fridays and other appointed days, to confess once a year, to receive the Holy Eucharist in the Easter time, to contribute to the support of their pastors according to their means if they have *any* means. They are not commanded to fast, which is harder than abstinence.

As must be borne in mind, here there is question of a thing strictly commanded, of a thing imposed by a true precept

which creates a true obligation, binds the conscience, makes it a mortal sin not to do that thing. However, even when Our Lord or the Church does not strictly command but counsels all, invites all to do a specific act, we rightly conclude that that act is manifestly easy and not hard. Our Lord and the Church desire and invite all to receive Holy Communion frequently and even daily. From such an invitation Pius X drew his conclusion that according to the mind of Our Lord and the Church it is easy and common among the faithful to have sufficient dispositions to receive, that the necessary dispositions can not be a state of perfection which is uncommon and unusual among the multitude, that freedom from the will to commit venial sin is not required, that it is enough to be free from mortal sin and to have a right intention. Such is the conclusion affirmed by Pius X to follow logically and manifestly from the mere counsel or invitation of Our Lord and the Church to all the faithful to perform this act frequently or daily.

St. Paul tells all, whether they eat or drink and whatsoever they do, to do it for the glory of God, to do it in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. According to all interpreters, "for the glory of God," "in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ" mean "from the motive of love for God." A most grave Doctor and scholar said that the Apostle here proclaims a divine *counsel* or invitation to all to perform every deliberate act from the motive of love for God, to expressly think of God and His goodness and to expressly or formally love Him in every deliberate act. St. Thomas teaches that here on earth, such is human weakness of mind and will, that it is impossible for any human being to thus continuously think of God and His goodness and to thus continuously love Him. He thence concludes that there *can not* be even a divine *counsel* to love God in every deliberate act.

Let us interrupt our present argument to give more of the teaching of the Angelic Doctor on these texts and the principle which they contain. It may startle some to hear that after denying that here there is such a *counsel*, he holds that these texts express a *precept* in the strict sense. But what does this precept command? Is it to love God actually in every act? No. This is impossible for any mortal man and could

not be even counseled by our most reasonable God. Much less could it be commanded.

This precept commands us *negatively*, in all our actions to avoid mortal or venial sin, everything opposed to God's honor and glory. Moreover, it commands, *positively*, in every deliberate act to act in conformity with right reason, rational nature, the rule or standard according to which the Creator commands every rational animal to act. According to this precept every deliberate act of ours need not be actually referred to God and His goodness, but must be such that it is referable, *can* be referred to God and His goodness. The oftener we thus refer it, the better. The oftener we love God before, during, or after eating or drinking or whatsoever we do, the better. But the impossibility of thus continuously thinking of God and His goodness shows that there is no divine precept or even *counsel* to do so.

Let us come back from our digression. Where the Church even counsels an act to all, we manifestly see that such act is easy. But Our Lord, in His dealings with us is tenderer than our fathers or mothers and even tenderer than tender Mother Church. Therefore if we see Him most strictly commanding the act of love to all who have attained the use of reason, we see that the act of love is easy.

Pius X taught us that the Church and Our Lord command little children who have just attained the use of reason not only to confess but also to receive Holy Communion, and concluded that they can easily receive it worthily. From the *command* of Our Lord to each one of these little children from the beginning to the end of the human race to love Him, it will follow that love for Him is easy, even in little children who have just attained the use of reason.

As has been noted in a previous chapter, the apostles in their Epistles and preachers in their sermons frequently and rightly *exhort* all promiscuously, to love God for His own sake and to love their neighbor for God's sake. As specimens we instanced the exhortations of the Blessed Curé of Ars and of St. John the Apostle. From such *exhortations* to such audiences, with Father Poulain we concluded that acts of love are easy. From the constant and universal *strict precept*

of God the easiness of such acts is concluded much more manifestly.

As has been noted above, some theological authors speak of the greatest and first commandment and of the second like unto it, as *positive* precepts both of the old and of the new law. They *are* positive precepts in the sense that they were expressly proclaimed by Moses and Our Lord and the apostles and that they are written under inspiration in books of the Old and New Testament. But they are not positive precepts in the sense that they are like the statutes prohibiting to eat the forbidden fruit of paradise or to eat meat on Friday.

Such abstinence is good only because it is commanded. It was commanded by God and the Church freely and not necessarily. It could not be known to be commanded without a special revelation from God or a special proclamation by the Church. Acts of love for God and our neighbor are commanded by God *because* they are good, and they are commanded by God not freely but necessarily. He was free to create or not to create angels or men. But given that He created them as they are, He was necessitated, obliged, by His own divine Nature, His own divine Reason and Will, to command them to love their infinitely perfect and most loving Creator and Father and to love one another as His children and their brothers. As soon as any one of us knows God as our infinitely perfect and most loving Father and our fellowmen as God's children and our own brothers, he also easily knows his own duty or obligation to love them. These two laws are a dictate of natural reason and are engraven on the heart of every man. They are natural law and even its most primary principles. It is natural law that a man can have only one wife and that death alone can part the two and free one of them to take another consort. For good reasons and for a time only, God permitted polygamy and divorce from the marriage tie. Polygamy and absolute divorce are against the natural law, but only against its secondary principles or precepts. The All-Holy Creator can dispense from these but not from the natural law's primary principles. Therefore, the duty to love God was always essentially inherent in man's knowledge of God by reason or by revelation.

Our Lord Jesus Christ made only a very few statutes which



are positive in the strict sense just explained. St. Thomas holds that He created no new obligations besides those to receive His sacraments and to obey the authority of His Church's teachings and rulings. The command to love God and our neighbor is not such a new obligation created by Our Lord.

Luther and other innovators often taught that the new law of Christ and His gospel freed us not only from the Jewish ceremonial and judicial prescriptions, but from all the moral law and from every obligation except to have faith or rather confidence in the Redeemer. We see these errors condemned in the following nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first canons of the sixth session of the Council of Trent:

"If any one saith that nothing besides faith is commanded in the Gospel, that other things are indifferent, neither commanded nor prohibited but free, or that the ten commandments nowise appertain to Christians, let him be anathema.

"If any one saith that a man who is justified and how perfect soever is not bound to observe the commandments of God and the Church, but only to believe, as if indeed the Gospel were a bare and absolute promise of eternal life, without the condition of observing the commandments, let him be anathema.

"If any one saith that Christ Jesus was given of God to men as a Redeemer in whom to trust and not also as a legislator whom to obey, let him be anathema."

How are these considerations relevant to our present question, whether any act commanded by God to all human beings in all times is easy? They help us to realize the truth of our answer to it. God always was a kind Father in laying burdens on the consciences of every one of His children.

But in spite of all that has been said so far, some may still have lurking doubts as to the kindness of God's dealings with man before the coming of Our Lord. Yet even these may be prompt and glad to believe to be easy an act commanded by such a legislator as Our Lord Jesus Christ to every human being from His day even to the consummation of the world, seeing that St. John says none of His commands are heavy, and that He Himself says, "My yoke is sweet and My burden is light." Moreover, as has often been observed with St. Thomas:

"God, who gives abundantly to all, does not refuse grace to him who does what lies in his power."

This maxim applies to every human being in every age. But according to the teachings of the New Testament and the Fathers and Doctors, the abundance of interior lights and inspirations since the coming of Our Lord is greater than before, especially inside the Church, but also outside of it. Therefore, if Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded an act to all for all time, it is thence more clearly seen to be easy to perform.

As has been said above, the outline of the argument in this chapter is as follows: No act always commanded by God to all is hard. But the act of love has been always commanded by God to all. Therefore, it is not hard. So far we have considered the first of those three propositions. We will now fix our attention on the second. Has it ever been denied? Yes, and the denial seems to have been providentially permitted in the past so that Rome might be obliged to speak out and finish the case forever in the future, brush aside for all time every possible remnant of clouds of doubt about this fundamental article of most practical truth.

It was the rigorism of Lutheranism, Calvinism, Jansenism, and Quietism in exacting acts of love that so irritated some Catholic writers that it provoked them to the contrary excess of laxism. In the face of the Holy See's repeated condemnations during almost three centuries, these puritanical isms kept cropping up inside the Church. They kept on attacking fear of God's punishments and hope for His rewards and indeed every virtue except love. They misrepresented these virtues as criminally selfish, as the unholy concupiscence condemned by St. John, as morally evil, as unmeritorious and unworthy of any reward from God, as insufficient dispositions for receiving justifying grace even with the actual reception of the sacrament of Baptism or Penance. They exacted a love so pure that it was puritanical, and a self-contradictory absurdity and chimera, and impossible to be conceived by one who knows the rudiments of revelation or who has good sense and uses it to reflect, and above all impossible for any one to practise. With logical inconsistency, which is their business and which we are not bound to attempt to justify, after representing the act of love as thus hard or rather impossible, they exaggerated its necessity. They exaggerated this necessity from many

sources, as has just been seen. They exaggerated it especially from the obligation of the greatest and first commandment, from the frequency and intensity of love to which they said it obliges. As has been often noted, since the Council of Trent it has been a not unrare phenomenon for minor theologians to be carried away by excessive ardor of love for some particular truth and of hate for some particular error and to sacrifice some other truth previously held and taught by the Catholic schools or even by the Catholic Church itself. This is what happened with regard to the greatest and first commandment and to the truth of its obliging all as a precept. Some met the extreme of novel, false rigorism not by the golden mean of traditional truth, but by the other extreme of novel, false laxism.

What were these laxist errors, is seen in the following propositions which were condemned by the Holy See :

1. "At no time of his life is man ever bound to elicit an act of faith, hope and charity on account of divine precepts pertaining to those virtues." Condemned in 1665.
2. "It is probable that the precept of charity toward God rigorously obliges of itself only every five years." Condemned in 1679.
3. "It is enough that a moral act tend to the last end interpretatively. Hence man is not bound to love either in the beginning or in the course of his moral life." Condemned in 1690.
4. "Whether he sins mortally who would elicit an act of love for God only once in his life, we do not dare to condemn." Condemned in 1679.
5. "It obliges only then when we are bound to be justified and have not another way by which we can be justified." Condemned in 1679.

Most of the words of these propositions are fully and immediately comprehended. However, it is in order to briefly explain the few terms which are technical.

In a special chapter we have treated lengthily of the act of love as a *way* in which we *can be justified*. As we there said, before the institution of the Christian sacraments the act of love was the only *means* or *way* which was provided by Almighty God for any adult having the use of reason to be justified from original sin or actual mortal sin, and since the institution of the Christian sacraments it is the only available way for the large majority of the members of the human race.

Let us suppose the following cases. Some one is in mortal sin and is about to receive, say, the sacrament of Confirmation or Orders or Matrimony, and in the circumstances it is practically impossible for him to previously confess and receive absolution. Or again, some one is near death and in mortal sin and no priest can be had. In each of these cases the individual is manifestly bound to be justified and there is no other way of justification for him but an act of love. The author of proposition five says that only in a case like those is any one bound by the *precept*. According to more accurate authors, that author is here guilty of confounding things which are distinct and different. He confounds the obligation or duty to be in the state of grace in order to save his soul, and on the other hand the mere duty to fulfil the greatest and first commandment; he confounds means and precept, necessity of means and necessity of precept. His words equivalently and really deny that there is ever at any time the obligation or duty arising from the precept as such.

Some may desire fuller explanations of the third proposition: "It is enough that a moral act tend to the last end interpretatively. Hence man is not bound to love either in the beginning or in the course of his moral life." What is the meaning of "interpretatively" in this context? It may have other meanings when used by other authors in other circumstances; but its meaning here may be seen from the following passage of the treatise on Human Acts by Victor Frins, S.J. (Freiburg, 1897, page 66):

"An agent is said to operate on account of an end intended interpretatively, when the direct and express intention of that agent altogether rests in a good or thing different from that good or thing which is said to be intended interpretatively, and yet that good, which is directly and expressly intended, by its own nature is borne and tends to that good and end to which we are said to be borne interpretatively. Thence in such a case we are said to intend the *further* or *ulterior* end interpretatively. Thus suppose that some one operates rightly on account of the good of mercy or justice but does not think of God. There is an injunction contained in 1 Cor. i. 31: 'Do all things for the glory of God.' He fulfils this injunction. By his act of justice or mercy, without thinking of God specifically and expressly, he intends the glory of God interpretatively."

Reference was made above to the doctrine of St. Thomas on this matter and to his interpretation of this text and of

others parallel to it. He denies that there is even any divine counsel to expressly think of God or expressly intend His honor and glory in every deliberate act. He holds that there is in these texts a divine negative strict precept forbidding us to do anything sinful or against the honor of God, and every act in any way sinful does detract from God the honor which is His due from us His rational creatures. Besides, according to his doctrine, there is a *positive* strict divine precept to thus intend the divine honor *interpretatively* in every deliberate act. According to him, the lack of such an intention makes the act not only less perfect, a negative imperfection, but a sin, not indeed mortal but venial, a venial sin of omission. The explanation of this point of his doctrine was not made above, but was saved for this place as more opportune.

The matter or object of some acts is good or bad according to their species, their specific nature or kind. Thus acts of faith, hope, charity, prudence, justice, fortitude, or temperance and acts opposed to any of these virtues, are good or bad according to their specific matter or object. The will intending any of these virtues or their contraries is good or bad, virtuous or sinful from the specific matter or object of the act. The matter or object of some acts is morally neither good nor bad, is morally indifferent, contains in itself no element of relation, of conformity or difformity to morality, to right reason or law. Walking, running, singing, dancing, etc., according to their specific matter or object are neither good nor bad morally, are indifferent according to their species. So far, all Catholic moralists are absolutely unanimous, all granting and holding that some deliberate acts of man are morally indifferent *in specie*. But when the specific matter is morally indifferent, is there ever a morally indifferent act *in individuo*? One may walk to commit murder, another to save a life or a soul. One may sing to praise God or to aid others to His praise, another to express or excite bestial passions. Here the intrinsic end of the operation of singing may be morally indifferent, but his extrinsic end, the end of the *operator*, is manifestly morally good or bad, causes the thing indifferent in itself to become morally good or bad. The good end justifies the indifferent means, the bad end causes the act of singing, indifferent as to its species, in the abstract, consid-

ered apart from its concrete end and circumstances, to become bad *in individuo*, in the concrete. Of course no good end can ever justify a means bad in itself, make an act which is bad in its species, in the abstract, good in the concrete. That a good end justifies a bad means was never taught with the approbation of the Church or of the Jesuit Order. That this has been taught by the Jesuit Order is pure calumny, not only against the Order but against the whole Catholic Church. Jesuit theological works can not be published without the *Imprimatur* of a bishop. Jesuit books of moral theology are more widely studied and followed than all others by the Catholic clergy throughout the world. In suffering this calumny Jesuits are in good company, that of St. Paul and the early Christians—"as we are slandered and as some affirm that we say, let us do evil that there may come good." (Rom. iii. 8.)

According to St. Thomas, he who deliberately does an act indifferent in its species, always has some motive or end in view, for else the act would not be deliberate, and every end must necessarily be either in conformity or in difformity to right reason, rational nature; is either forbidden or commanded or counseled or permitted by the divine Reason and eternal Will of God. Thus, according to St. Thomas and the more numerous school of Catholic moralists, though many human acts are morally indifferent *in specie*, none is morally indifferent *in individuo*. He who lives to eat and drink and makes his belly his god, acts in a way repugnant to his rational nature, his right reason, does an immoral thing. He who eats and drinks to live, in a way conducive to health and life, acts in conformity with his rational nature and right reason, acts for a morally good end.

According to the divine plan, natural delectations are as salt or some other condiment attracting to the performance of acts necessary or useful for life. "The divine intellect, the institutor of nature, added delectations on account of operations." (I. 2. q. 4. a. 2.) Mothers place on the table before their children sauces and condiments to allure the children to take and masticate wholesome food and to aid digestion. Some children would like to make a meal on the sauces alone. This is against the order intended by wise mothers, and is injurious to health and repugnant to right reason and morality. But

to relish the sauces and condiments while eating the wholesome food, is reasonable and orderly and morally good.

“Playing is not bad in itself. Else there would not be in games the virtue which is called *eutrapelia*. Playing, according as it is ordained to various ends or as it is clothed with various circumstances, can be an act of virtue or of vice. Because it is impossible to always act in the active or contemplative life, thence it is necessary to sometimes interpose joys between cares so that the mind be not broken by excessive severity and so that man may afterward apply himself more promptly to the works of the virtues. And if playing be exercised with such an end and with proper circumstances, it will be an act of virtue, and it can be meritorious if the player be in the state of charity or grace. But it seems that in a dancing play, these circumstances are to be observed: The dancer must not be an improper person, as a cleric or Religious. The time must be proper, as a time of liberation, weddings, etc. It must be performed with the proper partners, with proper music and the movements must not be lascivious, etc. If it be performed to procure lasciviousness, etc., manifestly it will be vicious. The adornment of women is to be judged according to the manner and measure and intention of the person. For if women wear ornaments which are becoming according to their own condition and dignity and observe moderation in their actions according to the custom of their country, there will be an act of the virtue of modesty which places the mean in gait, standing, bearing and all exterior movements and it may be able to be meritorious if it be in grace. Likewise, if a woman acts thus in order to be becomingly pleasing to a husband whom she has, or may have, and in order that he may be averted from attractions of other women. But if women have adornments which are more precious than are proper for themselves, there will be arrogance. The ornament will be deformed by the vice of lust, if they dress in a way to provoke concupiscence.” (St. Thomas on Isaias, c. 3.)

The ordinary reader may now have a clear idea of the proposition which we are considering. It says:

“It is enough that a moral act tend to the last end interpretatively. Hence man is not bound to love either in the beginning or in the course of his moral life.”

The last end of man is here understood to be the honor and glory of God, as man was made that he might know and love God on earth and in heaven. One who does an act because it is just or merciful or even merely because it is reasonable for himself in the circumstances, does not necessarily do that act *because* it honors or glorifies God, *because* he loves God in the strict sense. Thus he does not tend to that end actually. He

does not tend to it even *virtually*. The priest who gets a sick-call, leaps out of bed at night, takes the Blessed Sacrament, holy oils, etc., and walks toward the home of the sick man, may think of many other things on the way. But he starts out to do good to the sick man and he does not take back this intention. His every step has as its *virtual* intention the good of the sick man.

Again, on hearing of that sickness, he may have elicited an act of love for that soul on account of God or Our Lord loved above all things for His own sake, and started on the sick-call with special zeal and cheerfulness as on a mission of divine love. Here every step intended the last end of man, if not actually, at least *virtually*. As has been often said, Luther, Calvin, Baius, Jansenius, Quesnel and their disciples would say to that priest: "If you did not take every step on that sick-call, and, indeed, if you did not take every step in your life from the motive of love for God, this defect made every deliberate act of your will a real sin, if not mortal, certainly venial."

If we were to believe this teaching and bear it in mind and try to act on it and judge ourselves by it, what a source of scruples, fears, and troubles of soul, especially for those who try the hardest to walk in the presence of God and be perfect! It is so rash and devoid of all reason founded on revelation or good sense, and is so cruel, especially to tender consciences, that it necessarily exasperates the thoughtful. As has been noted, it was this rigoristic extreme that irritated and provoked the authors of those five condemned propositions to lose their heads and become blind to the golden mean of long accepted Catholic teaching and to go to the opposite extreme of laxism. The rigorists had said to them:

"You are bound to love God both in the beginning of your moral life and in its whole course, in its every stage and step, in every deliberate act of your will."

Their peevish reply was:

"No, man is not bound to love in the proper sense, either in the beginning or anywhere or at any time in the whole course of his moral life."

Their equally peevish reason for this reply was:

"It is enough that a moral act tend to the last end interpretatively."



There is here a double meaning in the clause, "it is enough." If I intend to do an act because it is just or merciful or even merely because it is reasonable, such intention *is enough* to make it a morally good act, I grant. It *is enough* to satisfy the divine precept to sometimes elicit acts of love in the proper sense, I deny. There is no divine precept to do every deliberate act from the motive of love, I grant. I am not bound either by the precept of loving God or by any other title to love God *always*, but I am bound by the divine precept and may be bound by other titles also, to love God *sometimes*. There is a divine precept for every one who has attained the use of reason to receive Holy Communion. From this precept we are not bound to receive *daily* and yet are bound to receive *sometimes*.

From the condemnation of proposition four, we know with certainty that he sins mortally who would elicit an act of love only once in his life. From the condemnation of proposition two we know that there is sound reason for asserting or believing that the precept of charity toward God rigorously obliges of itself more than once in every five years. Thus we know with certainty from the authority of these final decisions of the Church that this divine precept obliges oftener than once in our lifetime and oftener than once in every five years.

This alone is enough for our argument. As is to be observed, according to the authority of these decisions, the divine precept obliges thus *every* individual of the human race who has attained the use of reason. Such *universality* of this precept, yoke, or burden shows that it is not heavy but sweet and light.

St. Alphonsus held as certain that this precept binds every one at least once a month. Grave authorities of the illustrious Order of Preachers have held that it binds on very frequent special occasions. Ballerini combats the reasons given by St. Alphonsus and those others for the existence of such *frequent obligations* to acts of love from *the divine precept*. He appears to us to wish to keep as far as he possibly can from the hated rigorism of Luther, Calvin, Baius, Jansenius, Quesnel, and the Synod of Pistoia, and from the scruples to which they love to lead by imposing obligations not contained in the Scriptures or Fathers. The school which follows St. Alphonsus

and Cardinal Gotti and Father Sacrest of the Order of St. Dominic and holds that the divine precept obliges all very frequently would be the more favorable to the present argument that acts of love are easy. If these acts are clearly seen to be easy from our most kind Father commanding them to all rarely, they are more clearly seen to be easy from the same most kind Father commanding them to all frequently. However, not only the possibility but the easy possibility of an act follows from its being simply commanded to *all* by a Lord who tells us that He is not only just but sweet to all.

Let us come back to the unproved and false proposition:

“Man is not bound to love either in the beginning or in the course of his moral life.”

This proposition is known by us from the supreme authority of the Church to be false. Hence we know for certain from that authority that its contradictory is true. Its contradictory is that which affirms enough, but only enough, to make it false. Its contradictory is:

“Man is bound to love *either* in the beginning or in the course of his moral life.”

Its contrary is:

“Man is bound to love *both* in the beginning and in the course of his moral life.”

Do I know the truth of this contrary proposition *from the condemnation* and falsity of the other? No. However, I do know that man is bound to love in the course of his moral life from what the Church taught about other propositions, as, for example, when she said that the precepts of love rigorously bind oftener than once in every five years.

Do we know, mind, precisely from this or any other formal strict decision of the Church that man is obliged to love in the *beginning* of his moral life? No. Do we know from any other source that man is thus bound? Yes.

Pesch in his treatise on charity, paragraph 656, testifies that this is the *common* teaching of theologians. In our judgment it is the *unanimous* teaching of theologians properly understood.

There is a striking analogy between the obligation to make

an act of love in the beginning of our moral life or after the attainment of the use of reason and the obligation to then receive Holy Communion. The statute of the fourth Lateran Council in the year 1215 imposed or declared the latter obligation. Pius X interpreted that statute and the obligation imposed by it on little children and made the obligation clear and certain. Before him it was not clear and certain. Yet there *was* the statute and the *objective* obligation, but the *subjective* obligation began for parents, confessors, and little children only when the previously existing objective obligation became known with certainty.

Suppose that parents and the confessor now know that a child has attained the use of reason and is sufficiently instructed, do they sin by deferring the first communion for a few days or even a few weeks? No.

We who are now grown up were objectively obliged to make our first communion after the first dawn of reason. We did not do so. We made it not at the age of seven or eight but after our tenth, twelfth, or fourteenth year. Are we obliged to accuse ourselves in confession of having neglected our Paschal communion for, say, six consecutive years during which we were objectively obliged to communicate, as we now know with certainty? No. We did not then know of our obligation, at least as certain.

How long a delay of the child's first communion, after it has attained the use of reason, is required to constitute that delay a mortal sin on the part of the confessor, parent, or child? It is hard to determine precisely. Here the Church has spoken and has fixed the Paschal time even for the young. Many theologians teach that even the *divine* precept rigorously obliges to communicate once a year. Viva is considered the greatest, or at least one of the greatest authorities on the interpretation of propositions condemned by the Holy See. Lehmkuhl approvingly cites him as teaching that the Holy See here meant that the great precept obliges rigorously once *every year* when it condemned the proposition asserting: "It is probable that the precept of charity toward God rigorously obliges of itself only every *five years*." Be this as it may. Viva was not one of those whom Ballerini with St. Antoninus and St. Alphonsus so often rightly denounces for loving to impose

obligations which are not certain and for thus edifying unto hell.

Again, according to grave theologians, there is a striking analogy between the obligation to make acts of love and the obligation to pay a debt. I may have borrowed from you a thousand dollars on January 1, 1914. It is one thing that my obligation to repay you began on that date. When I am obliged to fulfil that obligation is another question. Let us suppose the time for repayment had not been specified. After I became able to repay and you demanded repayment, my obligation became urgent. How long a delay on my part was necessary to constitute a grave fault, it is hard to say.

Now all Catholic theologians teach that the precept to love God is natural law and even its primary and greatest principle and that it necessarily *objectively* obliges every individual from the first moment that he has attained the use of reason, that he *then* objectively incurs the debt of the golden tribute of love to Him who created each spirit to His own image and likeness that it might know and love Him. No Catholic theologian denies the existence at that first moment of reason of that *objective* obligation. No one can deny it. Such denial would be gratuitous and lead to absurdity. If the obligation did not exist then, there would be no ground for its existence later. But it can not be practically sinful to omit the fulfilment of this obligation, the objective obligation can not become also subjective until there is certain knowledge not only that God is infinitely good and worthy of our chief love but also that we are obliged to make the act of love for Him and that its further delay is sinful.

There are some theologians who hold that the obligation is urgent at the very first moment of the dawn of reason because man is then obliged to be converted to God. Others, granting that every deliberate act of man, under pain of venial sin, must be according to right reason and morally good and intend the last end of man in the glory of God interpretatively, contend that man is thus sufficiently converted to God. Of course they grant that the act of love is the most excellent possible, and that it is the most proper, fitting, and becoming beginning of our rational and moral life, but they deny that there is any strict obligation, even objective, from the precept to make that

best of beginnings. To cut this latter controversy is not necessary for the validity of our argument. In our judgment, *all* Catholic theologians grant and hold that Almighty God has imposed that objective obligation of loving Him above all things on every child from the first moment it attained the use of reason. Their unanimity here, without a formal decision of the Church, makes the matter thus taught certain to us. Now the imposing by Our Lord, who is sweet to all and especially sweet to little children, of this objective obligation makes it manifest that love for God is easy for little children and easy for all.

We again place under the reader's eye the general argument in outline. Every act always commanded by God to all is easy. But the act of love has always been commanded by God to all. Therefore it is easy. In the last pages we have been treating the proposition: The act of love has always been commanded by God to all. And we have shown it to be true from the express decisions of the Church and from the unanimous teaching of her approved theologians. We now come to proofs of this same proposition from the words of the Holy Scriptures. We should have said *in* and not *from* the words of the Holy Scriptures. Perhaps we should not have said *proofs* at all. For every reader knows that he *sees* in the Scriptures that love for God is there commanded.

Knowing this, he wonders how it was possible for those laxists who were Catholics and scholars to make the assertion that there is no precept commanding us to love God. It was in this way. They granted that there is a *true* command to love but denied that there is a command to love *truly* or in the proper sense. They granted that there is a precept of itself obliging strictly to tend to the last end of man *interpretatively* but denied that the mere precept ever obliges to tend to the last end either *actually* or *virtually*.

St. Augustine often calls charity toward God, and love for God, any good act, any good will by which we act in conformity with right reason, any act by which we will that which honors God, even though we do not will it because it honors God, who is good, and even though we will it because we fear God's punishments or hope for His rewards. But the same holy Doctor often teaches that this good will is not of itself,

in the proper sense, love, friendship, charity, love for our infinitely perfect Friend because He is infinitely perfect.

St. Thomas holds that every deliberate act *in individuo* is either guilty, selfish, whimsical concupiscence, or it is love for God in that generic sense of St. Augustine. The rigoristic isms held that every deliberate act is either guilty concupiscence or love for God in the *specific* sense. Those laxists held that acts may be morally good without being acts of love for God in the specific sense, but that there is no divine *precept* obliging to love in the specific sense, that the precept of love is not specific but generic and is not distinct and different from the precept "do good and shun evil."

In the following considerations on the texts of Holy Writ we will bear this error in mind and will insist that the Scriptures manifestly teach that there is not merely a counsel but a strict command to love God, and that this command is not merely generic but specific. We will try to aid the reader to understand certain texts but will often leave it to him to draw one or the other or both of those easy conclusions or even to see them explicitly expressed.

These texts not only prove but demonstrate the strict obligation of the specific divine command. Indeed, not only do they overwhelm the mind and compel it to be convinced and to assent to the truth of this obligation, but they almost daze and stun us when fully opening our eyes to the strictness and strength and severity of this obligation, when we hear Moses requiring love, St. Paul anathematizing every one who does not love, and Our Lord demanding the fulfilment of the commandments of love in order to possess eternal life. If any persist in clinging to any remnant of silly Lutheranistic, Calvinistic, Jansenistic, Quietistic, or other rigoristic, puritanical prejudices, and are consistent, they can not help being thus dazed and stunned. But they should then blame for this desperation of soul, only their own perversity and blindness in following the blind and leaders of the blind. They should not lay the blame on the Holy Scriptures, or on their express teaching about the strictness of this obligation. Those strong words of Moses, St. Paul, and Our Lord do not tell us to despair. They even tell us to hope all the more, since it is our tenderly loving Lord who has thus strictly commanded

love to every individual in every age of the world and His commands are not heavy and His yoke is sweet and His burden is light and the very strictness with which He thus imposes the obligation of love manifests all the more that the act of love is something most easy for every one resolved to avoid mortal sin.

If the reader will bear in mind the explanations just made and the parallel between the manner and the times when there is urgency in the obligations to receive communion, to pay a debt, and, on the other hand, to make acts of love, he will find in the words of Holy Writ cause not of scruples, fears, and troubles but of sweetest consolation and comfort of soul.

In the New Testament we often find the terms "the Law and the Prophets." "The Law" means the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses. The last of these is Deuteronomy. According to Hummelauer and other Biblical scholars, this whole book hinges on the greatest and first commandment. Its fifth chapter contains the second edition of the ten commandments or decalogue, the first being in the twentieth chapter of the book of Exodus. Interposed in this second edition of the decalogue we read in verses 9 and 10:

"I am the Lord thy God—showing mercy unto many thousands to them that love Me and keep My commandments."

This text has already been noted. It does not say expressly that many thousands will keep God's commandments and keep them out of love, will so love Him that they will keep His commandments from the motive of love. However, in its obvious, natural sense it implies this, naturally leads us to suppose that this will be a fact, and that acts of love will not be rare but common in fact. Hence the manifest inference is that in practice they are not hard but easy for the many. Thus this inspired text all but expressly affirms the conclusion or third proposition of our oft repeated syllogism, the proposition of our whole book.

We next note in verses 1 and 6 of chapter 5 of Deuteronomy the preface to the decalogue:

"Hear, O Israel, . . . I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."

Parallel to this is the preface to the greatest and first commandment in verse 4 of chapter 6:

“Hear, O Israel, the Lord Our God is one Lord.”

In each of these prefaces Almighty God states reasons showing why He has authority to impose, and Israel has the duty to do, what follows. The first states that He is the God of Israel, and has delivered him from the bondage of Egypt. The second states that He is the one Lord, not only of Israel but of all. The first derives the duty of obedience from the truth that He is Israel's Lord and from what he has done specially for Israel, the second purely and merely from the truth about what He *is*, without explicit reference to what He has *done* or to gratitude for any special benefit. In each we see the truth that He is God, the Lord, the one whose Being is simple, absolutely unlimited, and who is infinitely perfect in Himself, who, being asked His proper name, replied from the burning bush, “I am who am.” In the second this infinity of perfection is the more insisted on and emphasized, and we are explicitly taught that there is no Lord, Yahveh, Being, above Him or equal to Him.

Each preface is most solemn. If in the two there is any material difference in the form or expression, the solemnity, if possible, is greater in the second than in the first, greater before the injunction to love Him than before the injunction to adore Him and obey His laws.

Now the solemn preface,

“Hear, O Israel, I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage,”

is followed by the decalogue, the ten commandments, and these are certainly not mere counsels or invitations, but strict commandments obliging under pain of sin, and granted by all to be strict commandments. The second preface,

“Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord”

is most similar and even substantially the same and is at least equally solemn and thus leads us to expect a strict commandment for which it prepares the minds and wills of the hearers.

In verse 7 of chapter 5 that first preface is followed by the words,

“thou shalt not have strange gods in My sight,” etc.



In verse 5 of chapter 6, the second preface is followed by the words,

“thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole strength.”

“Thou shalt not” here is a form of speech used to express a strict command. “Thou shalt” is the same form of speech, has the same imperative sense and also expresses a strict command.

In the Gospel of St. Matthew (xxii. 35) we read:

“And one of them, a doctor of the law, asked Him, tempting Him, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said to him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with they whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets.”

Here Our Lord openly and repeatedly affirms that to love God is a commandment. In the parallel passages of the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke Our Lord openly and repeatedly affirms that it is a commandment. In each of these three passages the interrogator of Our Lord either openly affirms that it is a commandment or accepts the doctrine of Our Lord that it is a commandment.

Moreover, in each of the three gospels the term “commandment” is applied to the injunction to love God and to love our neighbor in the same breath and thus in the same sense. If any one denied that there is a strict commandment to love God, he would have also to deny that there is a strict commandment to love our neighbor. Those above-mentioned laxists did deny this also, in a proposition which it was not thought worth our while to cite. Our age tends to apostasy from God, but holds, if there is a God, He must command love for humanity.

Let us go back again to Deut. VI. 4 sq.:

“Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength, and these words which I *command* thee this day, shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt tell them to thy children

and thou shalt meditate upon them sitting in thy house, and walking on thy journey, sleeping and rising, and thou shalt bind them as a sign on thy hand and they shall be and move between thy eyes and thou shalt write them in the entry and on the doors of thy house."

Here Moses immediately *after* his most solemn promulgation of the greatest and first precept calls it a *commandment*. He thus calls it in many subsequent verses of Deuteronomy. We can not help making up our minds that what is called a commandment by Moses, the doctors of the Law and Our Lord *is* a commandment in the proper sense.

Some readers may here desire to interrupt the thread of our explanations and ask: "Does not Moses here seem to favor those rigorists who taught that love for God in the proper sense is strictly commanded in every deliberate act? Does he not command this love every day and at every moment of every day?" No; and his words have not been thus understood by the Church or any of the Holy Fathers or Doctors. We beg the reader to look at the text closely. As he will then see, Moses suggests many *special observances* as means adapted to aid Israel to love God truly and frequently. Suppose that he even commands and not merely suggests or counsels these special means. The Church commands the Friday abstinence as a means adapted to aid us to remember the suffering of Our Lord on the cross on Good Friday and to aid us to love Him. Does the Church thereby strictly command us to make an act of love for Our Lord at least once a week? Not at all. By commanding this abstinence and also by counseling us to make the sign of the cross most frequently, does she teach that most frequent acts of love for Our Lord are most easy and most proper for every one of the faithful? Yes. The parallel is perfect. Some of those observances here suggested or commanded by Moses are not kept by any of the Hebrews who thus show how they understand these verses. The Rabbis taught all children to recite at sunrise and sunset every day the words:

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord,"

as also the loving cry of the Seraphim in Isa. vi. 3:

"Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of hosts, all the earth is full of His glory."

They thus showed their belief that every child is easily capable of making in his heart these acts of love twice every day.

Some may push the questioning and ask: "Does not Moses, by following up so closely the strict command with these suggestions or injunctions of most frequent observances, each one of which normally embodies an act of love in the heart, show that this command strictly obliges much oftener than every five years or than once every year?" Cardinal Gotti says, more probably yes (in his treatise on charity, q. 3, d. 1, paragraph 4, n. xxv. 3). In all candor, he seems to us to be right. There would be little danger of exciting to scruples by preaching his opinion to the people after explaining what the act of love is and how all who are resolved to avoid even mortal sin and think of what they say and wish to get what they ask, usually make acts of love in reciting the Credo, Pater, Ave, Gloria, etc., or in making the sign of the cross, etc., etc.

Let us now resume the thread of our argument. With St. Thomas in 2. 2. 9. 44. 21 we argue:

"that which God *requires* from us falls under a precept. But God requires from us that we love Him, as is said in Deut. x. 12."

"And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God *require* of thee but that thou fear the Lord thy God and walk in His ways and *love Him* and serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul."

This argument is clear and convincing and needs no comment.

We next note the words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. xvi. 19 sq.:

"The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house, with whom I also lodge. All the brethren salute you. Salute one another in a holy kiss. The salutation of *me* Paul, with my own hand. If any man love not Our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema, maranatha. The grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My charity be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen."

The great apostle here pours out his whole heart in tenderly sweet words of affectionate love in the very midst of which he says,

"If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema."

He of whom St. Chrysostom said, "the heart of Paul was the Heart of Christ," thus manifestly teaches that a grave

penalty is merited and incurred by any one who does not love Our Lord Jesus Christ, and thus that every one is strictly commanded to love Him.

Stronger even than these words of the Apostle of the Gentiles are those of the Lamb of God in Luke x. 25 sq. :

“And behold a certain lawyer stood up tempting Him and saying, Master, what must I do to possess eternal life? But He said to him, What is written in the law? How readest thou? He answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength, and all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself. And He said to him, Thou hast answered right; this do and thou shalt live.”

We may realize the force of Our Lord's words here by placing alongside of them the parallel passage in Matt. xix. 16 sq. :

“Good master, what good shall I do that I may have life everlasting? Who said to him, Why askest thou Me concerning good? One is good, God. But if thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments. He said to Him, Which? And Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder; Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false witness; Honor thy father and thy mother and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith to Him: All these have I kept from my youth. What is yet wanting to me? Jesus saith to him, If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come follow Me.”

Substantially the same words as these last are recorded in the tenth chapter of St. Mark and in the eighteenth chapter of St. Luke. Here Our Lord draws the wide distinction between His counsels and His commandments. Counsels are required to be practised if thou wilt be perfect, commands enjoin a good which thou shalt do that thou mayest have life everlasting, if thou wilt enter into life. And Our Lord in St. Luke x. 25 tells the lawyer that what he must do to possess eternal life is to love God—“this do and thou shalt live.” Thus, according to Our Lord, to love God is as strict a commandment as to avoid murder, adultery, theft, lying, disobedience to parents, etc.

Thus far we have treated the question whether to love God is a strict divine command. We will now consider the question whether this strict divine command is only *generic*,

enjoins only to do good in general, or on the contrary is *specific* and enjoins acts of charity or of love for God in the proper sense.

We have already heard the Church deciding this question by her condemnation of those five propositions, the first of which is,

“At no time of his life is man ever bound to elicit an act of faith, hope and charity on account of divine precepts pertaining to those virtues.”

Here, according to the authoritative decision of the Church, there is a divine precept pertaining to the virtue of charity as distinct from the virtues of faith and hope and indeed from every other virtue. Every other prepares, disposes the soul for love for God and our neighbor, the end and aim of all the virtues, of all the law and the prophets.

To have the purpose of amendment, or the virtue of obedience to God, we must be resolved to fulfill every one of our obligations when it urges, to keep every one of the commandments, and one of these commandments and obligations is to love God above all things for His own sake. However, one may have the purpose of amendment and the virtue of obedience *before* he has actually elicited an act of love. No one of these handmaids of charity nor even all of them together can strictly command the actual presence of the most excellent queen of all the virtues. If she is present in a soul, her presence there commands and requires the actual presence of all the others, and their bringing with them their special powers and beauties in a degree impossible without her presence.

“Charity is created in the soul as a power by which man is inclined to the acts of all the virtues for God’s sake, that it may perform them promptly and easily.”

Thus St. Thomas in 2. 2. q. 23, a. 1. In the following chapters he teaches that charity is a virtue, and a special virtue and one virtue, and the most excellent of the virtues, and the virtue without which no other is simply a true virtue, in the sense that without it others may be conceived and exist but can not possess their own special perfection in a high degree. Thus charity or love for God for His own sake is not only *not* a

mere generic virtue but is the most *specific* of all of them and is even absolutely *unique*.

As has been seen in a previous chapter, penance or contrition in the broad sense of hearty sorrow and detestation for sins committed, with the firm purpose of not committing any sin in the future, may be called generic penance or contrition. We may be moved or determined to such sorrow and detestation and purpose from fear of God's punishments, or hope for His rewards, or obedient reverence for His authority, or gratitude for His benefits, or regard for justice toward God, or from religion, which is the virtue inclining us to pay our debt of honoring God's infinite excellence and recognizing our dependence on Him, or from charity, which loves God above all things for His own sake. Each one of those virtues with its special motive determines the will to keep each and all of the commandments, to do all the good commanded by God and to avoid all the evil forbidden by Him, to love all justice and to hate all iniquity.

For this reason each of these special virtues and motives was rightly called universal, and they *are* universal as to their effects, and, if you like, you may call them generic in this sense. Yet as causes of these universal or generic effects they are most specific, and charity, though the most universal in its effects, is the most specific and is even unique as a motive or moral cause. Hence the precept to practise charity or love for God and our neighbor for God's sake, being a precept to practise a virtue which is most specific and is even unique, is a precept which is specific and not merely generic.

The truth of the preceding paragraph is better realized if we peruse the following words of the Angelic Doctor. Question 44, 2. 2. divided into eight articles, is entirely about the precepts of charity. In article I, the conclusion is:

"As by charity man is directed to the last end and is disposed to those things by which he attains that end, it was proper that precepts be given about charity."

The truth of this is brought out by the following explanations:

"The end of the spiritual life is that man be united to God, and this is done through charity. And to this, as their end, are ordained all the things which pertain to the spiritual life. For this reason the

Apostle says 'the end of the precept [or law] is charity from a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned.' (1 Tim. i. 5.) All the virtues about which there are given precepts are ordained either to purifying the heart from whirlwinds of passion, as the virtues which regard the passions; or at least to having a good conscience, as the virtues which are about operations; or to having right faith, as those which pertain to the divine worship. And these three are required for loving God. For the impure heart is drawn away from love for God, on account of passion inclining to things of the earth. An evil conscience causes one to have a horror of the divine justice on account of fear of punishment. And faith which is feigned draws the affection to that which is feigned about God, separating from the truth of God. But in every class, that which is for itself is greater than that which is for another [as perfect health is a greater good than a medicine which is *for* health], and thus the greatest precept is about charity."

The following propositions proved in the other articles of this question or chapter are not without interest :

"Not only was it proper to give a precept about the love of God, but on account of those less learned in the divine law, it was also proper that there should be added explicitly also a precept about love for our neighbor."

"As the good which is the object of charity is either the end or that which is referred to the end, only two precepts concerning charity have been properly made, the one about love for God, the other about love for the neighbor."

"Since God is to be loved as the last end to which all things are to be referred, it was proper that it should be commanded to us to love him with our *whole* heart."

"It is fittingly commanded to us to love God from our whole heart, that is, that our whole intention be referred to God: and from our whole mind, that is, that our intelligence be subjected to God; and from our whole soul, that is, that our every appetite be directed according to God; and from our whole strength, that is, that our every exterior act be subjected to God."

"In Deut. vi. there are three clauses, referring to heart, soul, and might. In Matt. xxii. there are two of these, namely, those referring to heart and soul. That referring to might is omitted, but there is added one referring to mind. In Mark xii there are four clauses, referring to heart, soul, mind, and strength, which is the same as might. In Luke xi. these four are also touched upon. Instead of might or strength the term "powers" is placed. The meaning of these four is to be assigned. That one of these is omitted in some places, is because it is understood from the others. Thence it is to be by the heart. As the corporeal heart is the principle of all the movements of the body, so on the other hand the will, especially as to be considered that love is an act of the *will*, which is signified

the intention of the last end, which is the object of charity, is the principle of spiritual movements. There are three active principles which are moved by the will: the intellect, which is signified by the mind; the interior appetite, which is signified by the soul, and the exterior executive power, which is signified by might or strength or powers.

"Thus it is commanded to us that our whole intention be borne to God, that is, from our whole heart; and that our intellect be subjected to God, that is, from our whole mind; and that our appetite be regulated according to God, that is, from our whole soul; and that our exterior act obey God, that is, from all our might or strength or powers. However, Chrysostom takes 'heart' and 'soul' in a sense contrary to what has been said. Augustine refers 'heart' to thoughts, and 'soul' to life, and 'mind' to intellect. Others say, 'from the whole heart,' that is, intellect; 'soul,' that is, will; 'mind,' that is, memory. Or according to Gregory of Nyssa, by 'heart' is signified the vegetable life; by 'soul,' the sensitive life; by 'mind,' the intellectual life; because we ought to refer to God that by which we are nourished, feel and understand."

Our edition of the *Summa Theologica* is that printed by Marietti of Turin and corrected and annotated by DeRubeis, Billuart and others. We read here the following foot-notes:

"This variation, says Sylvius, is an indication that there is no great significance in that distinction, but that it is the same whether these or those clauses are inserted. Hence whether one or more clauses are expressed, it is more likely that one and the same thing is signified, namely, love for God above all things."

Another note tells us that the words attributed to St. Chrysostom are those of some other author. We read in still another note,

"However, other Fathers—Chrysostom, Hilary, Jerome, Ambrose—bring forth no difference between those clauses, thus understanding that the others are contained in the clause, 'from the whole heart.'"

These notes of these great Dominicans are in harmony with the following passage from the great Jesuit Cardinal Bellarmine in his treatise on the evangelical counsels, Book II, chapter 13.

"With regard to that enumeration, some of the Fathers thought that each one of those things is different and tried to show the distinction, so that by 'soul' is signified vegetable life, by 'heart' the sensible, and by 'mind' the intellectual. See Gregory of Nyssa in his book on the creation of man, chapter 8; Theophylactus and Anselm in their commentaries on Matt. xxii; chapter 22; Augustine, Book I,



chapter 22 on Christian doctrine; Bernard, sermon 20 on Canticles; and St. Thomas, in 2. 2. q. 44, a. 5.

"But more simple and more conformable to the Scriptures is the interpretation of those who teach that all those clauses mean the same thing and according to the style of the Scripture many and various words are used to express the same thing, for the sake of greater emphasis. Thus it is the same to love with the heart or to love with the soul or to love with the mind, namely to love truly, sincerely, not with feigning or simulation. For Hilary, Jerome, and Chrysostom in their commentaries on Matt. xxii and Ambrose on Luke x., explain this commandment and yet adduce nothing at all about any distinction between those words."

To these notes so relevant and full of good sense, we add the following further facts. We read in Deut. xxx. 3:

"The Lord your God trieth you, that it may appear whether you love Him with all your heart and with all your soul."

There are these same *two* clauses alone, also in Deut. iv. 29; x. 12; xi. 13; xiii. 4; xxvi. 16; xxx. 2, 6, 10; Jos. xxii. 5; xxiii. 14; 3 Kings ii. 4; viii. 48; 4 Kings xxiii. 3; 2 Par. vi. 38; xv. 12; xxxiv. 31.

There is but one clause in Eccles., xlvii. 10:

"With his whole heart David praised the Lord and loved Him that made him."

There is but *one* clause in Eccles. xlvii. 10:

"Therefore choose life that thou and thy seed may live that thou mayest love the Lord thy God."

Moses, Matthew, Mark, and Luke all begin with "heart" and "soul." But after these clauses each diverges from the others in some way. Moses and Matthew have three clauses, but differ as to the third. Mark and Luke have four clauses, but differ in locating and wording the last two.

There are two forms of issuing a command. The President may order an admiral to attack the enemy's fleet or to capture or destroy it. He may order a general to attack a post or to take it. The captain of a base-ball club may cry out to a batter who has hit the ball to run his best or to make the base. The last end of the fight and race of man on earth is perfect union with God by perfect love. According to St. Augustine, who in this is followed by St. Thomas and many others, the great commandment has been made by God in

the second of the above-mentioned forms. We read the following in St. Thomas, 2, 2. q. 4, a. 6:

“Although only in the fatherland can the precept of love be perfectly fulfilled, yet on the way it can be imperfectly fulfilled and more or less according to the sharing of the divine goodness.” In the book on the perfection of justice, Augustine says, ‘In the fulness of the charity of the fatherland will be fulfilled the precept, thou shalt love the Lord thy God,’ etc.

“For while there is still anything of carnal concupiscence which must be checked by holding it back, God is not loved altogether with our whole soul. A precept can be fulfilled in two ways, in one way perfectly, in the other way imperfectly. A precept is fulfilled by us perfectly when we arrive at the end intended by him who commands. However, it is fulfilled but imperfectly when though the end of him who commanded is not attained, yet there is no recession from the order to the end. Thus if the leader of an army commands his soldiers to fight, he perfectly fulfils the command who by fighting vanquishes the enemy as the leader intended. Yet he, too, fulfils it, though imperfectly, whose fighting does not achieve victory, but still does nothing contrary to military discipline. By this precept God intends that man be totally united to Himself, which shall be done in the fatherland when God will be all things in all, as is said in 1 Cor. xv. 28. Thus this precept will be fully and perfectly fulfilled in the fatherland, but on the way it is fulfilled, but imperfectly. Yet on the way one fulfils it more perfectly than another in so far as by a certain resemblance he approaches nearer to the perfection of the fatherland. Jerome writes in his epistle to Damasus:

“‘Cursed the man who saith that God commands anything that is impossible.’

“This shows that it can be fulfilled in this life in some way, though not perfectly. As a soldier who fights according to the rules, though he does not vanquish, is *not* blamed, so also he who does not fulfil this precept on the way, as long as he does nothing contrary to divine love, does not sin mortally. As Augustine says in the book on the perfection of justice near the end:

“‘Why should not there be commanded to man that perfection, although no one has it in this life? For a course is not run rightly if the goal to which we must run, is not known. But how would it be known, if it were manifested by no precepts?’”

Is the Angelic Doctor to be understood as teaching that he sins at least venially who does not here on earth fulfil the precept of love perfectly? No, for he here teaches that the soldier who fights valiantly but does not vanquish is free from *all* blame and fault. He here follows his master, St. Augustine, on the Spirit and the Letter, chapter 36:

“If there can not yet be such love for God as is due to that full and perfect knowledge, it is *not* to be imputed as a *fault*; it is one thing to not yet attain total charity and another to follow cupidity. Thence though man love God far less than he can love Him when seen, yet he ought not to seek anything illicit; as in things near to the senses of the body, the eye is able to be free from delight in darkness, though it can not fix its gaze on the brightest light.”

In other places St. Thomas gives further explanations of these doctrines. According to him it is impossible for man here on earth to love God with absolute continuity or with the greatest intensity of which his mind and will are absolutely capable. And he teaches that the precept of love being affirmative or positive and not negative obliges *always* but not *for always*. The law and its obligation are always a yoke or burden on us, as the law and obligation of honoring parents are always on children. They oblige never to do anything contrary to friendship for God, to reverence for parents, and to sometimes elicit acts of divine love and parental honor. The manner of obliging is different in negative precepts, which oblige not only *always* but *for always*. Thus we are obliged at every moment to observe the negative precepts: “Thou shalt not have strange gods in My sight. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. Thou shalt not kill, steal, lie, commit adultery, covet, etc.” To honor parents because it pleases God, who is good and loved, is the most perfect manner of fulfilling this precept. Love for God is the end of this precept or law as of each and all precepts. But the precept to honor parents does not obligate to this most perfect manner, and thus the end of the law does not fall under the law.

As we have seen, according to St. Augustine, St. Thomas and many others, the divine order to love God with our whole heart was issued in the form of the order to vanquish the enemy or to capture the post. The Lutherans, Calvinists, and Jansenists accepted this interpretation and abused and perverted it to conclude that God commands every one to love Him in every act, and even to love Him with all the intensity of which we are absolutely capable, to love Him as we will love Him when we perpetually see Him face to face with the saints and angels in heaven, where God is all in all. This is

manifestly impossible on earth. They thence concluded that God commands impossibilities.

How often the thoughtful reader sees sent forth from the editorial tripod the oracle that Christianity is a failure, demands what no one does or can do. The only Christianity regarded as worthy to be considered by these dogmatizers against all dogma, all known religious or moral truth, is the above described puritanism. How reckless their logic; Puritanism teaches that God commands things which are impossible; therefore Christianity, *all* Christianity teaches this. We say nothing of the arrogance which claims for itself omniscience of philosophy and theology, and imputes utter ignorance of them to the great number even of Protestants, and to the hundreds of millions of Catholics of nineteen centuries, and to all their holy Fathers, and holy Doctors, and Popes, and Councils, and theologians. As we have often insisted, and can not repeat too often or too emphatically, this one point of Puritanism has been a great cause of minds giving up belief in Christianity and in its religion and morality or at least a common pretext for giving up the practice of Christianity.

Suppose we accept that teaching of St. Augustine. Then we should accept it in the sense explained by himself and understood by his contemporary, St. Jerome, whom St. Augustine addresses as not only his friend but his father, and in the sense understood by St. Thomas and the whole Catholic Church since the age of St. Augustine and the great Doctors. As has been seen, none of those Puritanical absurdities follows from this interpretation of St. Augustine's teaching taken in its context and rightly understood.

According to him it is not to be imputed as a fault that man with the knowledge of God which he can have here, does not love God with his whole heart in the manner due to the full and perfect knowledge of God in heaven, lack of *such* total love does *not* imply man's following cupidity or disorderly love of self, or seeking what is illicit or delighting in darkness. According to St. Thomas, who had perhaps even too much reverence for the words of his beloved great master who himself wrote whole books of retractions, he who fights bravely against his own concupiscences or evil inclinations

is in no way blamed by God, who orders to utterly vanquish them.

Again according to St. Thomas and common sense love for God is in the will. Faith is in the intellect, the faculty by which we know truth. Through faith we believe truth pertaining to God revealed by God, on account of the authority of God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Through it we assent to the truth of such propositions as: "Christ is true God and true man. The Church or the Sovereign Pontiff is infallible in defining things pertaining to faith or morals. In the Eucharist the body and blood and soul and divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ are truly, really, and substantially present."

Faith is commanded by God under the extreme penalty: "He that believeth not, shall be condemned"—shall be damned. It is a free assent to truth. Some truths are self-evident to all, thus, twice two are four. No one has ever believed or been able to believe that twice two are not four. Our intelligence is necessitated to assenting to these self-evident truths. Every truth of faith is known not by its intrinsic evidence but by the testimony of a witness, a divine witness. Many of the truths taught by the word of God are real mysteries, truths utterly unknowable by natural reason alone. The Trinity is such a mystery, and the most fundamental truth of Christianity. Many do not believe revealed truths. All have the power not to believe. Faith or firm assent to these truths told us by God, is a free act. However, as we ultimately believe and know supernatural truth by the intellect, by which all known truth is known, faith is called an act of the intellect. On the other hand, goodness is the object of the will, the will is the subject in which the act of love inheres. We know God by the intelligence, it is by the will that we love the infinite good, cling to it, are united to it, rest in it, because it is the infinite good. Love for God presupposes intellectual knowledge of God as a necessary condition, and is called an act of the intellectual appetite or will. It is also possible for one who knows the infinite goodness and its lovingness toward us not to love Him and to even hate Him. The act of love is free. This free act of love can control *some* acts of our intellect, of our animal or intellectual appetites, of our bodily

members and senses, but not *all* their acts. He who loves God above all things for His own sake and thence decisively loves every virtue and every divine command does the best kind of thing to root out all inclinations to evil, and the greater the charity the less the cupidity. But when the Holy Spirit pours the charity of God into our souls and makes acts of love possible and easy, He does not root out concupiscence, inclinations to evil which come from our nature and may have been increased by our own repeated bad acts, which cause evil inclinations to be stronger. Such evil impulses existed in the soul of even the great Apostle of the Gentiles. They incline but do not determine the will to choose evil. Luther and Calvin and their disciples maintained that concupiscence is one of our powers. And it is certainly an active principle of many of our operations. But, they argued, we can not utterly root out concupiscence in this life, *therefore* we can not here love God with *all* our powers, and thus God has commanded us to do what is impossible. What an absurd conclusion from absurd principles!

When an opponent begins his argument by asserting an absurdity, something manifestly against common sense, it is hard to find a ground on which to meet him. These opponents all absurdly contended that there is no difference in reality between acts deliberate and indeliberate, between free choice of the will and necessitated impulse inclining the will. They denied that there is any such thing as free will. This is against common sense and was never really believed by any one. Every one who asserts that he believes it, in the next breath denies that he believes it. We say and must say that there is such a thing as free will, all are conscious that they are free in some acts. Without it there could not be, or be conceived, any moral good or evil, any just praise or blame, or any merit or demerit, or any reward or punishment. It was futile for them to grant free will in matters civic and deny it in matters religious or moral. Murder, adultery, theft, perjury, etc., are things civic but also moral, and moral, or rather, immoral in themselves, and have ever been so regarded by civilized courts. If we grant that sin is possible and hold at the same time that no acts of the will are free but all are necessitated whether by our natural tendency or by

the action of God's graces, his interior movements imparted to the soul, then there is some consistency in granting that God commands us to control all movements of concupiscence and in interpreting with Luther, etc., the last two commandments of the decalogue: (Thou shalt not covet—*Non concupisces*) about involuntary inclinations to evil, about acts impossible for any to avoid. We say if we grant the absurdity that none of our acts are free, from this absurdity about man, there may follow that blasphemy against God. But this sequence of that blasphemy really manifests that premise to be an absurdity, that premise is manifested to be false by this *reductio ad absurdum*.

As has been seen above, St. Thomas starts not with the false and absurd supposition that the will is never free, but with the manifestly true supposition that it is free in some acts, and that it has the power to love God above all things or not to do so. He supposes, secondly, that our other active faculties, or principles of operations, such as the intelligence, the animal or intellectual appetites, the five senses, the bodily limbs and organs, are not free of themselves but only as their movements are commanded or permitted by a free act of the will, that their movements or inclinations can be morally good or evil only when they are thus free. He again supposes, as the Council of Trent has defined, that concupiscence is from original sin and inclines to actual sin but is not sin, that the cause of its not being sin is that it is not free, that it is not possible for us to be absolutely devoid of all evil inclinations. With these rudimental truths before his mind, the Angelic Doctor explains how he who loves God strenuously endeavors to subject his various active powers to his reason and will, both of which he has subjected to the divine reason and will, out of love for them for their own sake.

Philosophically and theologically his teachings here are pure truth and absolutely certain. Scripturally they are not certain. He grants that each clause has a special distinct significance and in this supposition, he explains the text and shows how it comes to the same in the end to love God only with our whole heart or will and to love God with our whole heart, whole soul, all our strength, all our mind.

Was St. Thomas certain that each clause meant something

distinct and that he knew precisely in what the distinctions and differences consisted? By no means. He showed that he knew there could not be any such certainty. He not only quotes authorities of Fathers contrary to the interpretation which he accepts for the sake of argument, but he manifests deference to these authorities. How different his modesty here and everywhere from the arrogance of Luther and his followers, who in the face of grave opposing authorities and reasons assert that they know for certain the existence of that difference and in what that difference consists, and on this rash assumption build up mountains of difficulties or rather impossibilities of fulfilling the greatest and first commandment.

This arrogance is all the more incomprehensible to the truly judicious and critical, since with special reference to this very commandment Our Lord says,

“Do this and thou shalt live,”

and Moses says in Deuteronomy,

“The Lord thy God trieth thee that it may be made plain whether thou lovest Him in thy whole heart and thy whole soul or not.”

“Choose therefore life that both thou and thy seed may live, that thou mayst love the Lord thy God.”

“This commandment that I command thee this day is not above thee not far off from thee, nor is it in heaven that thou shouldst say, which of us can go up to heaven to bring it unto us and we may hear and fulfil it in work? Nor is it beyond the sea, that thou mayst excuse thyself and say, which of us can cross the sea and bring it unto us, that we may hear and do that which is commanded? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayst do it. Consider that I have set before thee this day life and good, and on the other hand death and evil, that thou mayst love the Lord thy God and walk in His ways and keep His commandments and ceremonies and judgments and thou mayst live.”

Moreover St. Augustine himself says with special reference to this commandment in Chapter 69 of the book on nature and grace:

“How is it heavy since it is the commandment of love? For every one either does not love and thus it is heavy, or he does love and it can not be heavy. But he loves who, as Israel is admonished, is converted to the Lord his God with his whole heart and his whole soul.”



Again on Psalm lvi. he says :

“God would not command us to do this if He judged it impossible for man to do it.”

Certainly the fulfilling of this commandment is here taught to be possible and easy and a thing that we can freely choose and do, and even a thing that will be done by the multitude. Not to speak of St. Augustine and St. Thomas in their doctrine here and in other places, does not the *word of God* here manifestly and expressly affirm that to fulfil the commandment of love for God, is easy and will be common?

As we have seen, St. Augustine, St. Thomas, and others hold that the great commandment was issued in the form similar to the command of the general to his soldiers to take a post. This general orders not only to fight but to so fight as to take the post, to vanquish the enemy; not only to take the means but to gain the end intended by himself. When they say that God commands that end here on earth, that end which can not possibly be gained on earth and which it is possible to gain only in heaven where God is all in all, do they take this part of the command in the strict sense, do they say or mean that it obliges under the pain of sin either mortal or venial? Manifestly no. They say openly that he does not impute failure to thus vanquish the foe and capture his position as in any way blameworthy, as any fault at all.<sup>1</sup>

Many may be familiar with the prayer of St. Ignatius Loyola in his contemplation for obtaining love for God :

“Take and receive, O Lord, my whole liberty. Accept my memory, understanding, and whole will. Whatsoever I have or possess, Thou hast given me. This all I restore to Thee and to Thy will altogether deliver up to be governed. Give me only the love of Thee with Thy grace and I am rich enough and desire nothing else beyond.”

Saving the reverence due to the many commentators on this text from the Spiritual Exercises of the soldier-saint, we can not help feeling that some of them leave many readers under the impression that it is hard and rare to say this prayer, to make this act of love for God in the heart. It is manifest that St. Ignatius in composing this prayer had under his eye the words of the greatest and first commandment as recorded

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix IV. page 564.

in Deuteronomy and in the gospels of Sts. Matthew, Mark, and Luke. "Whole liberty," "will," "memory," "understanding," here, manifestly mean neither more nor less than the "whole heart," "soul," "strength," "mind," there. Whatever difficulty there is in saying this prayer from the heart is neither greater nor less than the difficulty in loving God above all things.

Does he fulfil the great commandment, has he the substance of love and friendship for God who, from considering His infinite perfection and His great lovingness for us firmly, resolves to avoid mortal sin? Yes, and he truly loves God with his whole heart, soul, strength, and mind.

Does this love or friendship for God require besides, the resolve to avoid venial sin? No, though this is better and greater love and friendship.

Does this love or friendship for God require besides, the resolve to abstain not only from mortal and venial sin, but also from things which are licit, does it require the resolve to practice evangelical counsels for a moment or for our whole life? No, though this is still better and still greater love and friendship for God. Does it require that we have previously rooted out all evil inclinations? No.

Can each one of these questions and answers be applied not only to practising the greatest and first commandment but also to saying in the heart this prayer of St. Ignatius? Yes.

Our dissertation on the text of the greatest and first commandment has been a lengthy digression from our argument showing that there is a specific divine command to *love* God. However, it is not altogether a digression. There is a difficulty in the words of Deuteronomy and the Gospels. This difficulty, if left unexplained, might puzzle some minds. From it they might think that love for God with our whole heart is so hard that it is not imposed by the divine command as a strict obligation under pain of mortal sin on every individual who has the use of reason. From these full explanations every one sees that if he doubts the easiness of loving God, his doubts come from keeping company with Luther, Calvin, Baius, Jansenius and their insane Puritanical principles; and not with St. Thomas, St. Augustine, the Catholic Church, the

inspired authors, and Our Lord Jesus Christ and their sane principles of common sense.

We now resume and complete the thread of our direct argument and return to the consideration of the proposition: The strict divine command is not merely generic but is most specific, obliges not merely to shun evil and do good in general, but to make acts of love for God in the proper sense, is a commandment distinct and different from every other commandment.

In the Holy Scriptures it is called the great, the greatest, the first commandment. As is there said, on it and on the second like unto it, depend all the law and the prophets, all the precepts proclaimed by Moses and by the prophets, by all the inspired writers who followed him in the Old Testament. It is called by St. Paul the "end of the law," the end of all the divine precepts of the old and new law. Other special divine precepts forbid special vices, command the practice of special virtues inferior to love for God. Each one of them prepares and disposes the soul to be able to love God. This is the end at which each of them aims in the divine plan. Each one of them cures some sickness or weakness of the soul or is like a special food strengthening the soul's faculties. Each and all prepare and dispose it for its perfect health and strength and beauty which consist in charity or love for God because he is good. Certainly that which is greatest and first, which is one on which all others depend and which is the end or aim of all the others, is distinct from all the others, is a specific commandment.

As is said in Deuteronomy, love is something required of us by the Lord our God, is a debt, a duty to pay to our kind Father the tribute of the gold of love. Gold is the noblest, most excellent, precious, valued and prized of all the metals. Love of friendship from our fellow-man is the highest honor he can pay us, the most honorable to us, the gift which we most prize. Charity is the most excellent of all the virtues, the most prized by God, gives the greatest honor to His sovereign excellence and lovingness, is the only act which under His wise plan obliges, and, so to say, forces Him to be our friend, and to make us His friends, and to cover the multitude of our sins from His all-seeing eye, and to clothe us

with the spotless wedding garment of grace, and make us His adopted children, and sharers of His divine nature, and heirs of God, and co-heirs with Jesus Christ. A commandment, to pay this debt of the gold of charity, is certainly distinct from the commandments to pay the debt of the silver of the lesser virtues.

Charity is the fire which Our Lord came to cast on all the earth, on all the human race. And there is nothing that he wishes so much as that it be enkindled. Fire is distinct and different from water, earth, or air or any other of the elements. And the command that we permit the Holy Ghost to come and replenish the hearts of His faithful and to enkindle in them the fire of His love is a specific command.

A principle is different from the conclusions necessarily flowing from that principle, as the fountain-head is different from the many streams which take their source in it. The non-observance of any of the divine commandments is only a too sure sign of the non-observance of the greatest and first. The observance of the greatest and first is the mightiest cause of the most perfect observance of each one of the others. Charity and charity alone is the plenitude of the law, the bond of perfection. The precept about this principle, plenitude, and bond is certainly most specific.

Let us again borrow some of Cardinal Gotti's most lucid words from the place above cited.

"That precept is specific and distinct from all others which is proclaimed in special terms, by which there is specifically commanded a thing which is not commanded by the other precepts, which does not fall under the precepts which are given about other virtues and in virtue of which and not in virtue of the others, we are bound to refer all things to the glory of God. But the precept of love for God is proclaimed in special terms in Deuteronomy vi. 5: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with all thy strength.' In these words there is commanded love for God which is not commanded in other precepts, so that we be borne to God with our whole heart (as we see with St. Thomas q. 44, a. 1), which is not commanded by others. For 'the manner of loving does not fall under those precepts which are given about other acts of the virtues. For example, under the precept, "Honor thy father and thy mother," it does not fall that this be done from charity. However, the act of loving does fall under special precepts.' Finally in virtue of it and not of the others we refer all things to the glory of God. Thence the same St. Thomas says in 1. 2. q. 100, a. 10:

“Thus then he who honors parents is bound to honor them from charity, not in virtue of the precept, “Honor thy parents,” but in virtue of the precept, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart.” And as these two are affirmative precepts which do not oblige *for always*, they can oblige for different times. And thus it can happen that one while fulfilling the precept about honoring parents does not then transgress the precept against the omission of charity.’

“From these things there may be formed also the following reasoning:

“If the precept of charity were not special and distinct from other precepts, then as often as any other precept obliged, the precept of charity would also oblige. And the fulfilling of any precept could not exist with the omission of the mode of charity. But this is false as has been said by St. Thomas. Therefore, etc.”

As Cardinal Gotti well says, the precept of love for God is shown to be specific and distinct by its being proclaimed in most specific terms. Let us dwell on this point and look closely at the terms in which it is worded:

“Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole strength.”

We note the word “love.” It is not “believe,” “hope,” “fear,” “reverence,” “obey,” “be just to God,” “be grateful to God,” “be prudent,” “just,” “brave,” “temperate,” but it is “love.” And this term is specific, embodies an idea and expresses a thing which are specific and are distinct and different from the idea and thing embodied or expressed by any of those other terms or by all of them together.

We note that in the Latin versions of Deuteronomy, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, there is used the word *diliges*, and in none of them is there used the word *amabis*. Likewise in the Greek versions there is used the word *agapeseis* and not the word *phileseis*. Thus as a fact the word here used is the most specific that could be found to express love in the strict sense.

Parallel to the passages recording the proclamation of the commandment of love, is the following in the Gospel of St. John, chapter 21:

“Jesus saith to Peter, Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith to Him, yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him, Feed My lambs. He saith to him again, Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me? He saith to Him, yea, Lord,

Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him, Feed My lambs. He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Lovest thou Me? And he said to Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love Thee. He said to him, Feed My sheep."

According to the Latin and Greek versions, Our Lord in the first two questions uses the word *diligis*, *agapas* and He uses the word *amas*, *phileis* in the third. St. Peter in none of his answers uses the word *diligo*, *agapo* but uses the word *amo*, *philo* in each of the three. In the English version *love* is used in each question and in each answer. The cause is the poverty of the English language in this matter. It does not possess two words to express love and bring out the distinction between the two kinds expressed by *diligo* and *agapo*, on the one hand, and by *amo* and *philo* on the other. According to many ancient Fathers and modern scholars, St. John uses these different words to bring out this distinction. Our Lord asks in His first two questions whether Peter has the higher kind of love. Peter does not dare to affirm that he has this, but does dare to say that he has a love which is less high, and finally Our Lord condescends to Peter's diffidence and asks if he has that love which is less high.

St. Francis de Sales in his treatise on the love for God finds the use of the most specific word in the questionings of Our Lord and in the formulation of the commandment to be most providential.

The words *amo* and *philo* or their derivatives are indeed sometimes used in the Holy Scriptures to express love of charity toward God or man. "Predilection" and "amorous" and "amatory" have as their roots *diligo* and *amo*. As is thence manifest, *amor* is the more generic, may signify either spiritual, intellectual love or that which is sensual or sensible. "Dilection" is the more specific, supposes an act of the intelligence and a free act of election, choice, preference, predilection, which freedom is not common to us with the irrational animals or brutes.

Did the Holy Spirit here intend to mark this specific difference by the use of this, the most specific term that could be found to express this love of preference for God above all things, this love which presupposes an act of reason and faith

in the intelligence by which alone we know the invisible things of God, whom no one ever saw? We do not need to put this question. We are content to have recalled the facts about it. Anyhow this much is certain that the word "love" here means love and not faith, hope, or any other good act, but love in the proper and strict sense.

The commandment is not, "Thou shalt love justice and hate iniquity," but, "Thou shalt love, the *Lord thy God*." In the second commandment, like unto the first, the precept is, thou shalt love *thy neighbor* as thyself. Our Lord asks the question, "Lovest thou *Me*?" And Peter answers, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love *Thee*." The immediate object of love in each of the last cases is personal, a person; thy neighbor, me, thee. The object of love in the greatest and first commandment is also a person, the Lord thy God.

This Infinite Person is what theologians and philosophers call the matter, the material object of the act of love. In the act of faith we believe revealed truths about God or pertaining to God, we believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His only Son Our Lord, and in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, etc. In the act of hope we confide that we will receive life everlasting, will see and love and enjoy God and thus be eternally happy and that we will receive pardon for our sins and assistance of the divine graces, the means of obtaining this blessed object. In faith and hope we receive from God *truth* about God, *happiness* in God. In charity we do not look to receiving anything from God, but wholly *give* ourselves to Him, love Him, cling to Him, are united to Him as He is in Himself, we are friends of God as our infinitely perfect Father, Brother, Spouse, Friend. Thus God is the *matter* of the act of faith, of hope, of love, the material object of each one of the theological virtues.

This is the teaching of all the theologians. It is not thus technically formulated but yet is manifestly contained in the text, "Thou shalt love *the Lord thy God*." By this love at whose happiness are we glad? At that of the Lord Our God. To whom do we wish happiness? To the Lord Our God. Thus God is the material object of our love as here commanded.

Here He is also the *formal object*, the *reason*, the  *motive*

determining us to make this act of love. Why do we believe truth revealed about God? It is because of the authority of God revealing it, because it has been revealed and taught to us by God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Why do we hope to obtain pardon for our sins, the assistance of grace and life everlasting, eternal happiness in the possession of God by eternal perfect knowledge and love of Him? It is because we rely on God, on His infinite goodness and promises and on the merits of Jesus Christ Our Lord and Redeemer.

Why do we love God as He is in Himself, our infinitely perfect Father, Brother, Spouse, Friend? Because He *is* our infinitely perfect Father, Brother, Spouse, Friend. Thus God is not only the material but also the formal object of each one of the three theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. In gratitude we have love of pure benevolence, altogether disinterested. In hope we love God interestedly as the object of our own future happiness, as the good author of future benefits. In gratitude we love Him disinterestedly as the good giver of past benefits, we love Him for what He has done. We love the infinite goodness disinterestedly on account of His finite works. In charity we love the infinite goodness for the sake of itself, the infinite goodness, not for what it will do, or has done, but for what it *is*. Such is charity, or love of friendship for God as formulated in theology and in the catechism, in the act of love taught to every Catholic child, and as such it is a specific virtue distinct from all the others on account of its formal object or motive.

As such it is clearly seen to be commanded in this greatest and first precept. In Deuteronomy, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, it is openly manifested that the reason why we should love the Lord Our God is simply and purely because He *is* the Lord Our God, as in the commandment, "Honor thy father and thy mother," it is openly manifested that the reason why we should honor them is simply and purely because they *are* our father and mother.

The word "thy" is not only important but absolutely essential. With St. Francis de Sales let us if we can, suppose that there is another infinitely perfect being, another Father Almighty the Creator of another heaven and earth besides ours, who has never done anything for us, will never do any-



thing for us, has no authority over us, is no kin to us or to any one of ours. Could we love Him as a friend and second self? No, Friendship is mutual love of benevolence, is founded on mutual communication of good things as the necessary condition for it to exist or even to be conceived. The word "thy" here openly expresses this greatest conceivable closeness of kin of God to us, and of us to Him, and the phrase "the Lord *thy* God" openly at least implies infinite goodness as loving to pour itself out on its creatures, and especially on those made by it to its own image and likeness. This observation on the word "thy" is not irrelevant here, yet it is a brief digression from the special point which we were considering: namely, why we love God with our whole heart.

This specific motive is seen not only in the words of the precept but also in the words of the preface to it,

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord Our God is one Lord."

Hummelauer in his commentary on Deuteronomy says on these verses:

"From the unicity of God is derived the obligation of supreme love for Yahveh."

Segneri in his "Manna of the Soul," likewise sees in the verse, "Hear, O Israel, etc.," the reason or motive of this supreme love. As we have seen above, in the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy before the commands of the Decalogue, is placed the preface,

"Hear, O Israel, I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage."

And these words from their very nature and position are manifestly seen to be here said in order to express the motive why we should do each one of the things commanded in each precept of the decalogue. So also from their very nature and position it is manifestly seen that the words, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord Our God is one Lord" are here said in order to express the motive why "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart."

Let us make the following supposition: In a summer ramble on a high, steep, thickly wooded mountain I came to a cavern

in which I saw bubbling up a mighty spring of luscious crystal water. I gazed at it a moment and drank deep from it and wended my way down through the thicket. I soon came on a mighty brook gushing from the rocks. I again looked and drank and recognized in the waters of the brook the same purest of crystal and sweetest of taste as I had found in the spring just above. I knew from the nature and position of the spring in the cavern that it was the source from which the brook immediately below derived its waters. This preface is the great ocean spring of truth, beauty, and sweetness. The first commandment is right below it and partakes of the beauty and sweetness of the truth in that preface. It can come as a conclusion from that great truth and from it alone. Here the Holy Spirit, through Moses, teaches that from the truth that there is but one Lord and that He is infinitely perfect we must love Him above all things *because* He is our one infinitely perfect Lord.

Is this conclusion knowable and easily knowable by our natural reason? Yes.

“For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; His eternal power also and divinity, so that they are inexcusable, because when they knew God they have not glorified Him as God.”

It is inexcusable for any one who knows God, and His eternal power and divinity, not to glorify or love Him. The knowledge that there is one infinitely perfect God necessarily and manifestly includes the knowledge that we must love Him with our whole heart and also the knowledge that His unique, infinite perfection must be the reason or motive of our love.

To ensure the fulfilment of this great commandment by the frequent eliciting of acts of love for God with the whole heart, the Rabbis trained the Hebrew child to say at sunrise and at sunset, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord Our God is one Lord.” They did not deem it necessary to train the child to add the following words. Why? Because in their judgment and in truth, the great commandment immediately and manifestly flows from its prelude, and he who makes a devout act of faith in the truth that the Lord Our God is one Lord, will easily and naturally make the act of love for Him, as once the tree has a vigorous root it will naturally and easily bear its

proper fruit. This method of the Rabbis to ensure the practice of love by the child of Israel is followed by the Church to ensure the practice of love by the Catholic child.

In the following series of questions and answers at the head of the child's catechism we see first the truths on which the obligation of love is founded and then the expression of the obligation. It is not expressly taught that this obligation immediately follows from these truths, but the nature and position of this fountain of truth above, and of the river of love immediately below it, manifest that it is from that source that that river flows.

Who is God? A pure Spirit who is eternal, unchangeable, almighty, everywhere, knows all things, is all holy, all good, is in every way infinitely perfect, and made us and all things out of nothing.

To whose image and likeness did He make you? To His own image and likeness.

Why did He make you? That I might know Him and love Him and serve Him here on earth and be perfectly and eternally happy with Him in the next life by perfectly knowing and loving and serving Him here.

This same sequence is manifested in the following texts of Holy Scripture:

"To the king of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen." (1 Tim. i. 17.)

"Our Lord Jesus Christ . . . who is the Blessed and only Mighty, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone hath immortality and inhabiteth light inaccessible, whom no man hath seen or can see, to whom be honor and empire everlasting. Amen." (1 Tim. vi. 14.)

"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name."

"If I am your Father, where is My honor?" (Malachias i. 6.)

"Son, give me Thy heart." (Prov. xxiii. 26.)

"Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth, who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us a kingdom and priests to God and His Father, to Him be glory and empire forever and ever. Amen." (Apoc. i. 5.)

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, saith the Lord God who is and who was and is to come, the Almighty." (Apoc. i. 8.)

There is here the following sequence:

"Because I am He who is and was and is to come, and Alpha, and the beginning, I am Omega and the end," or the necessary object of Thy chief love.

The Church always, or nearly always, requires of us to at least pronounce devoutly the Holy Name of Jesus as a condition of obtaining indulgences attached to pious objects which she has blessed for us. She considers that devout faith in the truth embodied in this Name brought from heaven by the Archangel Gabriel, imposed at the first shedding of the Precious Blood in the Circumcision, placed above the cross on which its last drop was shed, this Name in which every knee must bow, that such devout faith is practically hope and love.

In the Catholic English or Douay version there is no conjunction (*and*) between these two verses, and there is none in the Latin Vulgate from which the Douay was translated. However, we find this conjunction in the English non-Catholic versions. We find it also in the Greek Septuagint and in the Chaldaic version and in the original Hebrew text. How it came to be left out from the Latin we could only guess. But it is sure that it is in the Hebrew, which is the original. Its presence there appears most important. That Hebrew particle which is translated by *and* often means *therefore* and the nature and positions of these two verses appear to us to require that Hebrew particle to be translated by *therefore* in this context. On this particle we read the following in the English edition of the Hebrew Lexicon of Gesenius.

“This particle is very widely extended in its use, since the Hebrews, in many cases in which sentences require to be connected, did not make any precise distinction of the manner of the connection. And thus in the simplicity of an ancient language they made use of this one copula, in cases in which, in more cultivated languages, adversative, causal or final particles would be used. To its use is to be ascribed very often a certain looseness of expression in Hebrew. The sense of a passage, however, makes the manner of the connection of sentences very definite.”

The Dictionary then goes on to state that this particle in different contexts must be rendered by *and*, *or* *but*, *because*, *in order that*, etc., and before conclusive or inferential sentences by *so that*, *therefore*, *wherefore*. To repeat and apply the above rule, the sense of a passage makes the manner of the connection of sentences by this particle very definite. The second sentence here is manifestly an inference or conclusion from the first, and hence the particle here must be translated

by *therefore* or *wherefore*. Thence these two verses, as originally spoken and written by Moses, read thus:

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord Our God is one Lord. Wherefore thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart," etc.

To come back to our comparison, the connection between the river of love and the ocean fountain of truth is in no way hidden, but is seen by natural reason and also by express revelation.

The force of the preceding observations is the better realized as we consider the meaning of the Hebrew "Jehovah" or "Yahveh," which is most indistinctly and inadequately rendered by "Lord" in English, "*Dominus*" in Latin, or "*Kyrios*" in Greek. We get our knowledge of the full import of this most proper name of God from the following passage in the third chapter of Exodus:

"Now Moses fed the sheep of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Madian, and he drove the flock to the inner parts of the desert and came to the mountain of God, Horeb. And the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. And he saw that the bush was on fire and was not burnt. And Moses said, I will go and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he went forward, He called to him out of the midst of the bush and said, Moses, Moses. And he answered, Here I am. And He said, Come not nigh hither, put off the shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. And He said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Moses hid his face, for he durst not look at God. . . . Moses said to God, So I shall go to the children of Israel and say to them, the God of your fathers hath sent me to you. If they should say to me, What is His name? what shall I say to them? God said to Moses: I am who am. He said, thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, He who is, hath sent me to you. And God said again to Moses, Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, the Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, hath sent me to you, this is My name forever and this is My memorial unto all generations."

This name in Hebrew is Jehovah, or Yahveh. Franzelin in his volume on the one God, page 267 sq., says:

"By this name as it is expressed in the Holy Scriptures, is designated absolute actual Being as the essence of God and as the fulness of perfection.

"This doctrine, demonstrated to have been expressed in the Scriptures, is in many ways illustrated by the Holy Fathers. For from

the sense and consensus of these, first, there must be held to be revealed by the very name 'who is,' the eternal divine Being and its intimate necessity of existing; secondly, this necessary being must be understood as absolute Being, and Being simply, because by it is comprehended every absolute perfection; thirdly, the divine Being differs with an essential difference from the concept of being as it can exist or be conceived outside of God."

From this fulness of absolute Being in God, with the Fathers, he goes on to show the following sequences:

"From it there follows such unity or uniqueness of the divine essence that the multiplication of this essence, or a number of gods, can not be conceived by the mind without the notion of the divine essence being subverted. Rightly, therefore, have the Fathers said that polytheism is atheism. The proper concept of the divine simplicity of Being is that it is pure actuality, that God is truth itself, goodness itself and beauty itself and the fountain and supreme standard of all truth, goodness, and beauty; and that God is a pure Spirit, infinite in knowledge and sanctity, is eternal, immense, omnipotent," etc.

This doctrine is not peculiar to Franzelin, but is shown by him to be that of the Holy Scriptures, the Holy Fathers, St. Thomas, Petavius, and all other standard Catholic scholastic or patristic theologians.

Every Hebrew child was taught all the substance of the doctrine here scientifically formulated. He was kept in such awe of this most proper name of God by which he is the most commonly designated in the Holy Scriptures that he never pronounced it with his lips, but in reading the sacred texts out loud always substituted for it "Adonai," or some other divine name.

In the text of Deuteronomy let us instead of the indistinct and inadequate words "Lord," "Dominus," "Kyrios," substitute "the Infinitely Perfect Being." Then it reads thus:

"Hear, O Israel, the Infinitely Perfect Being our God is the one only Infinitely Perfect Being. Therefore thou shalt love the Infinitely Perfect Being thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul and with thy whole strength."

Likewise in the Gospels of St. Matthew, Mark, and Luke the great commandment reads:

"Thou shalt love the Infinitely Perfect Being thy God with thy whole heart," etc.

Manifestly then the love commanded by God to all at all times is most specific.

As has been often repeated, the argument in this chapter is: Every act always strictly commanded by Almighty God to every one is easy. But the act of love in the proper and specific sense has always been strictly commanded by Almighty God to every one. Therefore this act is easy.

In the beginning of this chapter we promised to point with our finger to each of these three propositions as present to the eye of the reader in the express words of the Holy Scriptures. We submit that this promise has been fulfilled and that by this and the preceding chapters we have demonstrated that acts of love are easy for every one resolved to avoid mortal sin and that thus heaven is open to souls.

Have any non-Catholic friends done us the honor to peruse these chapters? If so, we beg leave to address them a few special words. You have seen the assaults against the truth that acts of love are easy and the truth that heaven is open to souls and the many other truths on which those two rest. How violent these assaults have been, from how many able individuals and bodies of men, from how many sides and through how many centuries! And yet have you seen the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church or the See of Peter even once swerve in the least from any one of those many truths? After seeing this fact, is it not in order for you to seriously ask yourselves the following questions? Is not the finger of God here and here alone? If this work were of men would it not long ago have fallen to nothing? How is it that men have not been able to destroy it? Is it not solely that this work is of God?

In every age of Christianity you have seen multitudes of able men carried about like little children by every wind of doctrine that could beat against the truth that love is easy and heaven is open, a truth without which there is no Fatherhood of God or brotherhood of man. And you have likewise seen amid these variations of hostile errors the Catholic Church ever the same, *semper eadem!* How can we comprehend this phenomenon of history? What cause can be assigned for this fact? The sole cause is that the Church is the heir of the promise of the Son of God:

"Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

"All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth. God ye therefore and teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and, behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."

Does any reader ask us, "What shall I do to love God and open heaven for my soul and practise the doctrine which is here preached?" The answer is very simple. Believe that God and love are what they are taught to be by the Scriptures, Fathers, and Church. Begin every prayer by believing in God the *Father* Almighty, by believing in *Our Father*, who is in heaven. Try to recollect this cheering truth also amid your work and recreations. With humble and confiding hope often earnestly beg your heavenly Father to give you the good spirit, His love with His grace. Then make up your mind to try to overcome your inclinations to be selfish, to try to do what is right as you see it, to avoid imperfections or venial sins or at least mortal sins. With the help of God's abundant graces aim at doing these simple things, and you will love God and God will love you, you will be His friend and He will be your Friend and heaven will be ever open for your soul.



## APPENDIX I

We will here make lengthy extracts from the Wurzburg theology in its treatise on hope by Kilber. Our edition is that of Paris, 1853. These extracts begin at n. 264, p. 224. They are mainly texts from the Scriptures and Fathers. They show that "servile fear is honorable and lawful, is efficaciously opposed to sin, is useful for acquiring the various virtues, and leads to charity, justification, and sanctifying grace." That servile fear naturally leads to love for God is thus seen to have been long taught by approved authors and to have been demonstrated by them by invincible arguments.

"1. Simply servile fear is morally good and is lawful.

"Proofs.

"Malachi i. 6: 'The son honoreth his father and the servant his master. If then I be a father where is my honor? and if I be a master where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts.'

"Luke xii. 4 sq.: 'And I say to you my *friends*: Be not afraid of them that kill the body and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you shall fear; fear ye Him who after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. Yea, I say to you, fear Him. . . . And I say to you, whosoever shall confess Me before men, him also shall the Son of man confess before the angels of God. And he that shall deny Me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God.'

"Here fear of hell is proposed by Our Lord as a motive worthy of His friends and even of His martyrs; Apoc. xiv. 7: 'Fear the Lord and give Him honor because there cometh the hour of His judgment.

"Council of Trent, Sess. 6, Can. 8: 'If any one shall say that fear of hell through which with sorrow for our sins we fly to the mercy of God or abstain from sin, is a sin or makes us greater sinners, let him be anathema.

"Augustine—Sermon 13 on words of the Apostle: 'Fear is the servant, charity is free, and, so to say, fear is the servant of charity. Lest the devil possess thy heart, let the servant go before in thy heart and keep a place for the mistress to come. Act, act even from fear of punishment, if you are not yet able from love of justice.

"Augustine on Psalm cxvii. n. 8: 'That fear, not yet chaste, fears God's presence and punishments. From fear it does whatever good it does, not from fear of losing that good, but from fear of suffering that evil. It does not fear lest it lose the embraces of the most beautiful spouse. But it fears lest it be cast into hell. That fear is good, is useful.

"2. The Scriptures, Councils and Fathers describe servile fear as a work, effect and gift of God, an impulse of the Holy Spirit and a supernatural act.

"Proofs.

"Ex. xx. 20: "To try you the Lord came and that His terror might be in you.

"Ps. cxviii. 120: 'Pierce my flesh with Thy fear, for from Thy judgments I have feared.'

"The Council of Trent, Sess. 14, c. 4: 'declares attrition . . . to be a gift of God and an impulse of the Holy Spirit.

"Augustine on Grace and Free Will, c. 18, n. 39: 'We ought to beware lest we think that we have not received the spirit of the fear of God which is doubtless a great gift of God. . . . We have received also the spirit of that fear of which Christ Himself says: fear Him who has the power to destroy both the soul and the body into hell.

"3. Servile fear is efficaciously opposed to sin.

"Proofs.

"Prov. viii. 13: 'The fear of the Lord hateth evil.'

"Ecclus. i. 27: 'The fear of the Lord driveth out sin.'

"The Council of Trent says of it: 'If it exclude the will of sinning,' and thus signifies that this effect is not only possible but also frequent.

"Augustine on Ps. cxviii. about the worm that dieth not, etc., says: 'Men hear these things and because they will truly come to the impious, they fear and abstain from sin . . . they fear but do not yet love justice.'

"4. Servile fear is useful for acquiring the various virtues.

"Proofs.

"Prov. xiv. 27: 'The fear of the Lord is the fount of life so that it turns away from the ruin of death.'

"Ecclus. i. 16: 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

"Council of Trent, Sess. 6, c. 6: 'By turning from fear of the divine justice by which they are usefully agitated to considering the divine mercy, they are raised to hope.' Sess. 14, c. 4: 'The Ninivites at the preaching of Jonas full of terrors, usefully shaken by fear, did penance.'

"Augustine, Sermon 214 de tempore: 'When we fear the punishment which God menaces, we learn to love the reward which He promises, and thus by fear of punishment a good life is retained, by a good life a good conscience is obtained, so that by a good conscience no punishment is feared. Therefore let him learn to fear who wishes not to fear. Let him learn to be anxious for a time who wishes to be secure forever.'

"5. Servile fear leads to charity, justification and sanctifying grace.

"Proofs.

"Ecclus. i. 17 sq.: 'The fear of the Lord is the religiousness of knowledge, religiousness shall keep and justify the heart.'

"Ecclus. ii. 20: 'They that fear the Lord will prepare their hearts and in His sight will sanctify their souls.'

"The Council of Trent, Sess. 6, c. 6, speaks of acts of fear as a disposition and preparation for justice itself, and Sess. 14, c. 4, about the fear of the Ninivites it says that 'they obtained mercy from the Lord.'

“Jonas iii. 10: ‘And God saw their works that they were turned from their evil way.’ In the Scriptures all those who are turned from their evil ways are justified and none were then justified without an act of charity or perfect contrition. Here there was the perfect kind of turning from evil ways.

“The Council in Sess. 14, Can. 5 anathematizes those who say that attrition does not prepare for grace.

“Augustine, Catechism c. 5: ‘Charity is to be built up even from the very severity of God by which the hearts of mortals are agitated in most salutary fear.’

“In the ninth treatise on Ep. of Jo., n. 4: ‘Fear as it were prepares the place for charity.’

“There he compares fear to a medicament which wounds and takes away rottenness and is followed by charity as health.

Kilber further on seems to have aimed at making a collection of all the objections and difficulties which had been ever brought forward by Lutherans, Jansenists, Quietists, or others against his propositions and proofs. And he meets them all squarely. The following are specimens of his explanations:

In some places St. Augustine and other authorities condemn fear of God’s punishments as morally evil but in these places they refer to servilely servile fear and not to simply servile fear. Faith without hope or charity is certainly less perfect and yet is not a bad act and is even a good act. The same is to be said of hope without charity. And the same is also to be said of servile fear without charity. Servile fear of God’s punishments and hope for His rewards are not benevolence toward God, not pure love for God. They will good to ourselves, flee an evil to ourselves, they are interested love, love for ourselves. But they do not make self our supreme or last end or our idol. They are not acts of concupiscence whether of the flesh or of the eyes or of the pride of life. They even tend to quell these evil concupiscences. They are acts of most sane self-preservation, which certainly is a duty and reasonable and not morally evil, but the first law of reasonable nature as made by God.

Indeed, the Scriptures teach that *perfect* love expels fear. Love perfect in kind as soon as it exists in a soul even in its lowest degree, increases hope to obtain pardon for our sins, the assistance of God’s grace and life everlasting through the merits of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Redeemer. Thus greater hope of God’s pardon and graces and rewards manifestly tends to lessen fears of sinning or of being punished for sins. Likewise he who in love fixes his mind on God’s lovingness and goodness naturally fixes his mind less on God’s justice and punishments. And thus, too, even remiss charity tends to lessen servile fear. If love is perfect not only in kind but in degree and is generously resolved to avoid not only mortal sin but also venial sin or imperfection, it expels fear of punishments and of sinning more strongly than did the lesser degree of love. And as this objectively perfect love grows more intensely firm and ardent subjectively, it

proportionately tends more strongly to expel fear of sinning and fear of damnation. However, without a special revelation it can not take away all doubt as to our final perseverance and salvation, and can not expel absolutely all fear of God's punishments.

These remarks have been made as explanations which some readers might desire to hear after Kilber's statement that fear of God's punishments naturally leads to love for Him because He is good in Himself.

Henry Kilber was born in 1710 and died in 1783 and first published in 1752 the work from which we have taken these extracts. From then to now the "Wurzburg Theology" has been one of the most widely used of all text-books for university courses of dogmatic theology. This consideration manifests that this teaching of Kilber has found great favor ... the Church for more than a century and a half, and that Billot was not the first to state that love for God above all things is natural in any one who for any good reason, even for fear, has so overcome concupiscence or the inclination to will evil that he is resolved to avoid mortal sin.

The dogma of the eternal torments of hell is, alas, often made a stumbling block to belief in Christianity by many philosophers of our day who have more reverence for the authority of Ingersoll and Voltaire and their school than for the Bible or Divine Traditions or the teaching of the Church with the hosts of Fathers and Doctors on her side. God has taught us that hell is eternal and that its fire is real fire. We see this plain teaching in the Old and New Testament and in the writings of the Fathers. It was denied before and during the time of St. Augustine and he treats it almost exhaustively and there is scarcely any difficulty which he and St. Thomas have not solved. The Church tells us explicitly that the Scriptures and Fathers are to be understood in this sense and no other. The last words of the Athanasian Creed, which all priests are obliged to recite in the Roman Breviary, are: "Those who have done good things shall go into life everlasting, but those (who have done) evil things, into fire eternal. This is Catholic faith which unless each one faithfully and firmly believes he can not be saved." In the year 1201 Pope Innocent III wrote to the Archbishop of Arles:

"The punishment of actual sin is the torment of perpetual gehenna." The twelfth ecumenical and fourth Lateran Council in the year 1215 inserted the following words in its definition against the Albigenses and Joachim and the Waldenses: "Those with the demon will receive perpetual punishment and those with Christ eternal glory." Why do I believe in the eternity of hell? Because in my act of faith I say, "O my God, I firmly believe all the sacred truths which Thy holy Catholic Church believes and teaches, because Thou hast revealed them, who canst neither deceive nor be deceived." God has revealed it to the Church and the Church *tells* me that God revealed it to her. The prime source of my knowledge of this truth is thus the wisdom and veracity of God and not my natural science or understanding.

How easy it is to raise objections and ask questions on it which it would take volumes to answer. However, a judge or parent who punishes is not then concluded to be cruel and to love pain in another for its own sake merely. His purpose is justice or correction and prevention of crime. We must not argue that we are fathers or mothers and we would not inflict such painful or lasting penalties on our children. Therefore, God, who is more loving than we, can not inflict them. We remark that Brutus inflicted death on his own son for treason and is usually praised by historians for thus having shown himself a faithful magistrate of the young republic of Rome. Fathers and mothers are not judges and guardians of the order of the whole State and much less of the whole universe, as God is. It is futile to compare sinners to little children. God punishes only those who have the full use of reason and only for fully deliberate crimes and only for obstinately neglecting to repent of them up to the last lucid moment of life. That objection supposes that God is like us in all ways, that He has only our knowledge of the malice in offending Infinite Majesty. How thoughtless in the small boy to say "George Washington was just like me." How much more thoughtless in the grown man or woman to say "God is just like me." If I am a thoughtful scholar, I know of many manifest truths which are hard or even impossible for my mind to thoroughly reconcile with one another. Thus God is holy and yet created me with free will and knew that I would sin mortally. How can He be both holy and my creator? How can He be both just and good? I will not profess to answer this in a line, but rather say I do not fully comprehend the how, and yet I know that He is both just and good. However, I will ask this question: Does the justice of God obligate Him *always* to exercise this attribute? No. Well why should His mercy obligate Him always to show mercy?

This discussion is not irrelevant to our question whether it is easy to love God. We have held against the original reformers (Luther, Calvin, etc.) and against the Jansenists that it is impossible to love a being so unjust and cruel and unholy as they represent God to be, but that it is easy to love the God of Catholics. We have known an Episcopal bishop who often said that our whole land and especially our large cities would soon be like pandemonium except for faith in hell and fear of the firearms of the police or soldiers. We have not at hand a learned work on hell written by the late Doctor Schedd of the Union Theological Seminary of New York and can not cite the precise page. We can not approve of all the pages of that interesting volume, but we were struck by one of his sayings:

"All who do not believe in hell, go to hell;  
All who believe in hell go to heaven."

Of course this is a manifest exaggeration. Here we have a typical Episcopalian and a typical Presbyterian of our day believing that the dogma of hell is holy and wholesome. This gives us the occasion to remark that orthodox Protestants will not object to us that we are

inconsistent in saying that hell fire is eternal and love for God is easy. There is seen to be this much truth in Doctor Schedd's saying that belief in the fire and eternity of hell does naturally and normally operate toward driving the repentant sinner to have recourse to God's mercy whence the step to love is natural and easy. Many a father is known by his children to be such that for enormous crimes, especially if incorrigible, he will disown them. And yet such a father is easily loved as a father by those children when resolved to be good children. His known stern hate for crime is not a hindrance but rather a help to their love for him. Similarly, God's menaces of eternal punishment are not a hindrance but rather a help for us to love Him as long as we are resolved to avoid mortal sin."

## APPENDIX II

"It is to be asserted that not only by infidelity, by which faith itself is lost, but also by whatsoever other mortal sin, although faith is not lost, the grace of justification which has been received is lost." (Council of Trent, Session 6, Canon 15.) "By mortal sin man is made worthy of eternal death, according to Rom. vi. 23. 'The wages of sin are death.' But every one having charity has the merit of eternal life. For it is said in John xiv. 20, 'If any one loveth Me, he shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.' In this manifestation consists eternal life, according to John xvii. 3. 'This is eternal life that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent.' But no one can be worthy at the same time of life eternal and death eternal. Therefore, it is impossible for any one to have charity with mortal sin. Therefore, charity is taken away by one act of mortal sin.

"One contrary is taken away by another contrary supervening. But any act of mortal sin is contrarily opposed to charity, according to its own nature, which consists in this, that God is loved above all things, and that man totally subjects himself to Him by referring all that he has to Him. It is, therefore, of the essence of charity that one so love God that he wish to subject himself to Him in all things and follow the rule of His precepts in all things. For whatever is contrarily opposed to His precepts is manifestly contrarily opposed to charity. Hence, it has in itself that it can exclude charity. If charity were an acquired habit depending on the power of the subject it would not necessarily be taken away by one contrary act. For an act is not contrarily opposed to a habit but to an act. But the continuance of a habit in a subject does not require the continuance of the act. Hence, an acquired habit is not excluded by a supervening contrary act. But charity being an infused habit depends on the action of God, the Infuser. For in the infusion and conservation of charity He is like the sun in

the illumination of the air. And thus, as light would immediately cease to be in the air from an obstacle being placed to the illumination by the sun, so also charity ceases to be in the soul by this, that an obstacle is placed to the inflow of charity from God into the soul. But manifestly by whatsoever mortal sin which is contrarily opposed to the divine precepts, there is placed an obstacle to the aforesaid pouring in. For by the fact of a man by his choice preferring a sin to the divine friendship, which requires that we follow the Will of God, it is a consequence that immediately by one act of mortal sin the habit of charity is lost. Whence also Augustine says that man, when God is present to him, is illumined, but when He is absent he is immediately in darkness. And from God the departure is made not by intervals of places but by the turning away of the will. . . .

“Charity is lost in two ways. In one way directly by contempt; and not in this way did Peter lose charity. In another way indirectly when some act contrary to charity is committed on account of a passion of concupiscence or fear; and Peter acting contrary to charity, in this way lost charity, but soon recuperated it. Charity imparts a certain union with God, but faith or hope does not. Every mortal sin consists in a turning away (or aversion) from God, and thus every mortal sin is contrarily opposed to charity. But not every mortal sin is contrarily opposed to faith or hope, but only certain special sins, and by these alone the habit of faith or hope is taken away, as the habit of charity is taken away by any mortal sin.” (St. Thomas, 2. 2. 9. 24. a. 12.)

“The virtue of charity is founded on the communication of the divine beatitude, and, therefore, is not natural or acquired by natural powers, but is infused into the soul of man by the infusion of the Holy Spirit.” “The charity of God is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.” (Rom. v.) “The Holy Spirit is the love of the Father and of the Son, the participation of which love in us is created charity.” (Ibid 2. 2. 9. 24. a. 2.)

“Charity of the way can be increased even to the terminus of life. We are said to be travelers from this, that we tend to God, who is the last end of our beatitude. In this life we advance insofar as we come nearer to God. We come nearer to God not by steps of the body but by affections of the soul. This nearness is effected by charity, because by it the soul is united to God. Thus it is of the essence of charity of the way that it can be increased. Thus the Apostle calls charity a way.” “I show you a yet more excellent way.” (I Cor. 12, 31.) “Charity increases not only according to the number of its objects as more or fewer objects are loved, but also according to the intensity of its acts as something is loved more or less.” (Ibid 2. 2. 9. 24. a. 4.)

“The infusion of charity imparts a change from not having charity to having charity, and necessarily something comes into the soul which was not in it before. The augmentation of charity imparts a change from having charity less to having it more, and thence

it is not necessary that some thing be in the soul which was not in it before, but only that that thing which was less into the soul be more into it. And this is what God does by increasing charity, namely that it be more into the soul and that the likeness of the Holy Ghost be more perfectly participated in the soul." (Ibid 2. 2. 9. 24. a. 5.)

"Charity cannot be diminished in itself and directly. Mortal sin does not diminish but totally corrupts charity. It corrupts it efficiently, because any mortal sin is contrarily opposed to charity. It corrupts it also meritoriously, because when a person by sinning mortally acts against charity it is worthy that God subtract charity from him. Charity *can not* be diminished by venial sin either efficiently or meritoriously. Not efficiently because it does not concern charity. Charity is about the last end. Venial sin is a certain disorder about the means to that end. Love of the end is not diminished by some one committing a disorder about the means to the end. Thus, it sometimes happens that some sick persons have great love for health, and yet have disorderly dispositions about the observation of diet. Thus also in speculative sciences false opinions about inferences from principles do not diminish the mind's certainty of those principles. Similarly, venial sin does not merit the diminution of charity. When one is delinquent in a less thing he does not merit to suffer detriment in a greater thing. God does not turn Himself away from man more than man turns himself away from God. Hence, he who has a disorderly attitude about things which are means to the end, does not merit to suffer detriment in charity by which he is ordered to the end. Whence it follows that charity can not be by any means diminished directly. However, there may be said to be indirectly a diminution of charity in a disposition to its corruption by venial sin or in cessation of works of charity. In the infusion of charity there is required the movement of free will. Thence whatever diminishes the intensity of free will dispositively operates unto this that the charity which is infused be less. But for the conservaton of charity there is not required any movement of the free will, else it would not remain in those who are asleep. Thence, from the defect of the intensity of the free will charity is not diminished." (Ibid 2. 2. 9. 24. a. 10.)

### APPENDIX III

Let us hear St. Alphonsus (in his Moral Theology, Book 6, Treatise 4, on the Sacrament of Penance, N. 442) answering another objection about these words. "Our adversaries read not '*contritionem caritate perfectam*' but '*contritionem caritatem perfectam*.' From this they infer that the Council speaks of intense charity. But Petrocorensis, Frassen, Lugo, and myself read in many copies of the tridentine decree, '*caritate perfectam*.' And this seems more likely



to be the true reading. The word 'perfectam' more appropriately regards not 'caritatem' but 'contritionem.' The Council here divides *contrition* into imperfect and perfect. Furthermore, suppose that perfectam agrees with caritatem, it does not follow that the Council requires outside of the sacrament a charity which is intense. For predominating charity, though remiss, is still perfect charity, though that which is intense is more perfect. For the perfection or imperfection of charity (as Tournely well says) is taken not from remissness or intensity but from the motive from which it springs. Hence, perfect charity is that which springs from the motive of the goodness of God, and imperfect is that which springs from the motive of a good to be obtained from God. Therefore, if the Council had said not 'caritate' but 'caritatem,' it would have used the term 'caritatem perfectam' to distinguish it from the beginning of love which does not go so far as to constitute predominant charity. Hence, it is manifest that the opposite teaching, which says that contrition with remiss charity does not justify outside of the sacrament, is altogether unsupported by any reason and is false. Hence Lugo says that it is rejected by theologians commonly. Coninck (cited by Lugo) calls it erroneous; Vasquez, contrary to Catholic teaching; Alphonsus Curiel, unsafe to faith; and others rash and scandalous; rash because in a most grave matter it is at variance with all theologians and the common sentiment of the Fathers; and scandalous because it deters men from more frequently procuring contrition. And thence Gonet testified that Sylvius having previously defended it, afterward retracted it. Since, says Gonet, it most openly contradicts many testimonies of Scripture and Councils and Holy Fathers."

We promised to prove the proposition of this chapter from the authority of Catholic theologians. In this passage St. Alphonsus has proved it for us sufficiently from this source. His own conviction is here seen to be most pronounced. Before leaving the topic of authorities let us hear St. Thomas.

We read the following in the supplement of the Summa Theologica (3. Q. 5. A. 3.)

"Q. Whether a small contrition is sufficient for the destruction of great sins? Conclusion: Sorrow, howsoever small, provided it is sufficient for the essence of contrition, destroys all guilt." The Saint proposes two objections, and then adds: "But on the contrary, any grace making the soul grateful (to God) destroys all mortal guilt, which can not co-exist with such a grace. But any contrition is informed by grace making the soul grateful. Therefore, howsoever small it be, it destroys all mortal guilt. I reply that it must be said, as has often been said (namely, Q. 1. A. 2 to 1, and Qs. 3 and 4 A. 1), contrition has a twofold sorrow. One is of reason. It is a displeasure at sin committed, and this can be so small as not to be sufficient for the essence of contrition. Thus, if sin displeased one less than the separation from his end ought to displease. As also love can be so remiss as not to suffice for the essence of charity. Contrition has another sorrow (or sadness) in

the feeling and the smallness of this sorrow does not hinder the essence of contrition, because of itself it is not joined to contrition essentially, but, as it were, is adjoined to it accidentally; and again it is not always in our power. Therefore, we must hold that howsoever small the sorrow be, provided it be sufficient for the essence of contrition, it destroys all guilt.

"1. It seems that a small contrition is not sufficient for the destruction of great sins. For contrition is the medicine for sin. But a corporal medicine which cures a lesser disease, is not sufficient to cure a greater. Therefore, the smallest contrition is not sufficient for destroying the greatest sins.

"To this first objection it must be said that spiritual medicines have infinite efficacy from the infinite virtue which operates in them, and thus that medicine which suffices for the cure of a small sin, suffices also for the cure of one which is great. As is evident from Baptism, by which both the great and the small are remitted. And the case is similar about contrition, provided it attains to the essence of contrition.

"2. We should have greater contrition for greater sins; but contrition does not destroy sin unless it be as great as it should be. Therefore the smallest contrition does not destroy all sins.

"To this second objection it must be said, this follows from the necessity that the same man should have more sorrow for a greater than for a lesser sin, according as the former is more repugnant to love, which causes sorrow. But if another man had as much sorrow for a greater sin as that first man has for the lesser sin, such sorrow would suffice for the remission of his guilt."

St. Alphonsus thus clinches the argument for the authority of St. Thomas in this passage:

"It is of no avail to say that the Holy Doctor here speaks of sorrow required *in the sacrament* of Penance. Indeed, he here speaks of the parts of this sacrament. However, in speaking of contrition he speaks of it in general, as a virtue, as other authors do who, when treating of the sorrow required for the sacrament of Penance, treat also of contrition in general. Whence St. Thomas proposes the question, whether a small contrition be sufficient for the destruction of great sins? And then he answers: 'Any contrition is informed by grace which makes the soul grateful to God; therefore, howsoever small it be, it destroys all guilt.' Neither here nor anywhere in the whole article does the Holy Doctor say a word about the sacrament of Penance. Why, then, is his teaching to be restricted to contrition in the sacrament? Besides, that he speaks of contrition in general is evident from the questions which he proposes previously: 'Is contrition sorrow assumed for sins with the purpose of confessing?' 'Must there be contrition for original sin?' 'Is our whole life a time for contrition?' 'Have souls contrition for sins in the other life?' The subjects of these doubts can not be reduced to contrition as matter of the Sacrament.

"Moreover, that St. Thomas was for this doctrine, namely, that

all contrition destroys sin outside of the sacrament, is evident from what he says. (3P. Q. 86. A. 3.) 'If that one sin were displeasing to Him because it is against God loved above all things (which is required for the true nature of penance) it would follow that he has penance for all his sins.'

"Likewise from the text brought forward above, where, as we related, he says that 'sin is remitted through contrition alone . . . but if before he is absolved, he has this sacrament in desire . . . the virtue of the keys operates in him and he obtains remission of guilt.'"

St. Alphonsus cites for this doctrine texts from the Scriptures, St. Augustine, and St. Chrysostom, and then he adds: "St. Thomas teaches this more openly (2. 2. Q. 45. A. 4) where he says: 'Charity *can not* exist with mortal sin.' And that the Holy Doctor here speaks not of intense, but only of predominating charity, is evident from what he himself has said in Q. 24. A. 12, to which he remits us. There he says: 'Any act of mortal sin is contrarily opposed to charity according to the latter's own essence which consists in this, that God be loved above all things.'"

St. Bonaventure tells us (in 4 D. 16. P. 1. A. 2. Q. 1): "That one grieve more sensibly for sin than for any loss, this is a matter of perfection and propriety, not of necessity. But insofar as sorrow is called a displeasure of reason, I say that the displeasure is measured according to the quantity of charity. In order that any one have charity, it is necessary that he love God above all things. But this is to love God above all things, that for no loss or advantage would one be willing to offend God. So must we understand about the displeasure of contrition."

In the course of this chapter we have seen various strong reasons, which are those given by theologians against the necessity of intensity in contrition for justification. We have seen the names of many theologians cited against this false and disheartening fancy. We have heard St. Alphonsus declaring the common teaching of theologians and Fathers. As was promised, we have heard most pronounced views of St. Augustine, St. John Chrysostom, St. Bonaventure, St. Thomas and St. Alphonsus, each one of whom is a canonized Doctor of the Church. Previously we had heard the episcopate, and Pius IX commending St. Alphonsus as the Church's great modern champion against Jansenism and all false rigorism. This commendation manifests the great value of his authority against this special tenet of rigorists who were either Jansenists or Jansenistic. We have heard him citing Toumely, who was in his day the great light of the Sorbonne or University of Paris. Besides he has cited representatives of the orders of St. Francis, St. Dominic and St. Ignatius. Moreover, he elsewhere approvingly cites the great Bellarmine and the great Suarez, who so completely refuted Baius that they left little, if anything new to be said on this special matter. As far as we know, no theologian has contradicted the common doctrine for over two centuries. If any docu-

ment appears to contradict this doctrine, then either it is to be interpreted according to this doctrine or it is to be rejected as a mistake.

#### APPENDIX IV

Do all Catholic authorities agree with St. Augustine, St. Thomas and others that the great commandment is rightly interpreted to have been issued by God in that form? No. Bellarmine does not. He alleges St. Bonaventure as not agreeing either. He alleges St. Bernard as agreeing in one of his writings and disagreeing in another. He alleges St. Augustine himself on Ps. lvi, as speaking of this very commandment and saying:

“God would not have commanded us to do this if he judged it impossible to be done by man.”

He adds the remark:

“Here Augustine appears either to have changed or at least to have explained his former teachings.”

Bellarmino in this passage of his treatise on the life of the evangelical counsels, Chapter 13, adds the following:

“We have demonstrated that that teaching of some of the Fathers is not contrary to the doctrine on evangelical counsels. We will now show that it is not in conformity with the divine words. The other teaching is this: ‘With thy whole heart’ means not all the acts of the heart or every possible intention, so that it is commanded that we do nothing with our heart but love God, and at that, with the supremest vehemence of love, but only that we love God with our chief love and in our love prefer or equal nothing to Him. So that in this respect there is contained only that which is to be done and not also the end for which it is to be done.”

From this there follow six corollaries. The first is that all mortal sins are against this precept, because in every mortal sin the creature is placed before the Creator. The second is that honorable love for relatives and friends is not against this precept, although it be not actually referred to God, because we are bound to love Him not solely but chiefly. The third is that venial sins are not against this same precept because they do not change the last end. The fourth is that the movements of concupiscence, even though toward things otherwise most grave, as infidelity, blasphemy, adultery, etc., are not against it. For as love for God is in the will, only voluntary movements are against it. The fifth is that this precept *can be perfectly fulfilled in this life*, because it does not exact anything except that we love God more than creatures. The sixth is that God can be loved with our whole heart more and less. For he loves more who for God’s sake abstains from things licit, than he who abstains from only things which are illicit, and yet both love God with their whole heart.

That this explanation is more in conformity with the truth and with the Holy Scriptures can be proved in many ways. First, because

here and there in the Scriptures, the words *whole* and *all* are taken in this sense. "Herod was troubled and all Jerusalem with him." (Matt. ii. 3.) "And as they went about to kill him, it was told the tribune of the band that all Jerusalem was in confusion." (Acts xxi. 31.) In these texts it is meant that a great part of those who were in Jerusalem were troubled and not all absolutely and yet the Scripture says all, the whole, simply. Thus also in Genesis xxxi. 6, Jacob says:

"You know that I have served your father to the uttermost of my powers" (*totis viribus*). And yet in those years Jacob had done many other things. In 2 Kings xv. 13: "All Israel followeth Absalom with their whole heart." Other things of this kind are often found in the Scripture, which often uses common phrases. In common conversation we often say absolutely: I am wholly occupied in this matter, I will do this with all my powers. Yet we mean nothing but our chief care and occupation.

Secondly, the *Scripture* teaches that this commandment is *easy* and supposes that it can be kept and yet this would not be true if it could not be fulfilled in this life.

"And now Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee but that thou fear the Lord thy God and love Him and serve Him with thy whole heart." (Deut. x. 12.)

"The Lord thy God trieth thee, that it may be made plain whether thou lovest Him in thy whole heart and in thy whole soul or not." (Deut. xiii. 3.)

"What must I do to possess eternal life? What is written in the law, how readeest thou? Thou shalt love, the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, etc. And Our Lord answered, This do and thou shalt live." (See Luke x. 25.)

Certainly all these things suppose that this commandment can be fulfilled in this life, else there would be a ready answer to them.

Thirdly, God promised that He would bring it to pass that in the New Testament He would be loved with the whole heart, with the whole soul, etc.

"The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed that thou mayest love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." (Deut. xxxi. 6.)

"And I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord, and they shall be My people and I will be their God because they shall return to Me with their whole heart." (Jer. xxiv. 7.)

Incidentally, we call special attention to these last scriptural texts and to their interpretation by Bellarmine. Moses and Jeremias both clearly prophesy that love for God will be common in the New Testament, that at least then it will be common in fact, and thence easy, not only in the abstract and in theory, but in the concrete and in practice.

Each one of these texts is alleged also by Cardinal Gotti to show that the fulfilment of the commandment to love God is not only possible but easy on earth and most common under the New Testa-

ment. Readers may like to hear some of his own lucid words from his classic treatise on charity. In Chapter ii, article 2, he thus proposes and answers some objections:

"They object firstly, 'There is no one who in this life loves God with his whole heart and his whole soul, i.e., who so exerts all his powers in loving God that he can not love Him more. And yet God exacts this from us by this precept. Therefore, etc.'

"I answer, I deny the minor; namely, that God exacts this. The words 'thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart,' may be understood in two ways. In one way, so that we love Him as continuously and intensely as He can be loved by us, so that we can not love Him more intensely. And we are *not* commanded to love God in this way in this life, but this pertains to the perfection of the love of the fatherland. In another way, to love God with our whole heart may be rendered so that it means that we place our chief aim in loving God, by preferring God to all things. 'All' and 'whole' are taken in this sense in 2 Kings xv. 13, and in Genesis xxxi. 6. It is common to say, 'That person is totally occupied in studies.' And it is in this way that we are commanded to know God in this life, to love Him with our chief love by preferring or equally nothing to Him and by being ready to despise anything repugnant to His friendship and to do anything demanded by His friendship. He who prefers a thing to God, loves that thing and not God, above all things. He who equals anything to God, loves God with the half and not the whole of his heart. Thus St. Thomas 2. 2. q. 24, a. 8, and on charity a. 10 ad 4, where he says:

"It is essential to charity that God be loved above all things and that no creature be preferred to Him in our love.'

"Secondly they object. 'No matter how just or holy a man becomes, he does not live without at least venial sins. But as long as he commits these, he does not love God with his whole heart. Therefore, etc.'

"I answer from St. Thomas 2. 2. q. 44, a. 4:

"To love God with our whole heart happens in two ways. One way is *actually*, that is, so that the whole heart is always actually borne toward God. That is the perfection of the fatherland. The other way is, that the whole heart of man be borne toward God habitually, namely, so that man admit nothing contrary to love for God. And this is the perfection of the *way to* the fatherland. To this venial sin is not contrarily opposed. For it does not take away the habit of charity as it does not tend to an object which is opposite, but only impedes the use of charity.'

"Thus St. Thomas. Hence, it follows only that he who sins venially does not love God actually, namely by that act by which he sins. However, it does not follow that he does not love God by his habit, that he does not with his whole heart retain God habitually as his last end.

"Thirdly they object. 'In this life concupiscence is always opposing the spirit. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit

against the flesh. For these are contrary to one another. So that you do not the things that you would." (Gal. v. 17.)

Therefore all the powers of the soul never serve God.'

"I reply, I deny the conclusion. Granting that concupiscence always opposes the spirit, yet it does not always conquer the spirit, but with the aid of divine grace, it is often conquered by the spirit, and the powers of the soul subjected to the spirit can love God wholly. Paul in the same place enumerates the fruits of the spirit and says in verse 22,

"The fruit of the spirit is *charity*, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity.' "Although the powers of the soul are not always actually wholly borne toward God, it is enough that they are thus borne some time. This precept being affirmative, does not oblige *for always* or that we be borne toward God with all possible intensity but that we love Him more than all other things.

"Luther objected from the following texts:

"Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves as of ourselves, but all our sufficiency is from God.' (2 Cor. iii. 5.)

"It is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish.' (Philipp. ii. 13.)

"If therefore thy merits are God's gifts, God crowns thy merits not as thy merits but as His own gifts.' (Aug. on Grace and Free Will, c. 6.)

"From these texts he inferred that God imposes on us the precept of love, yet we can not keep it but it is only God in us who fulfils it.

"Thus that wretched man taught insanity. He didn't advert that if there is a precept about our acts, then by our acts we ought to fulfil it, although our acts are also from Him and are His gifts, because we do them only with the aid of His grace. Hence Paul says in 1 Cor. xv. 10:

"By the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace has not been void in me, but I have labored more abundantly than all of them. Yet not I, but the grace of God with me.'

"As if he said:

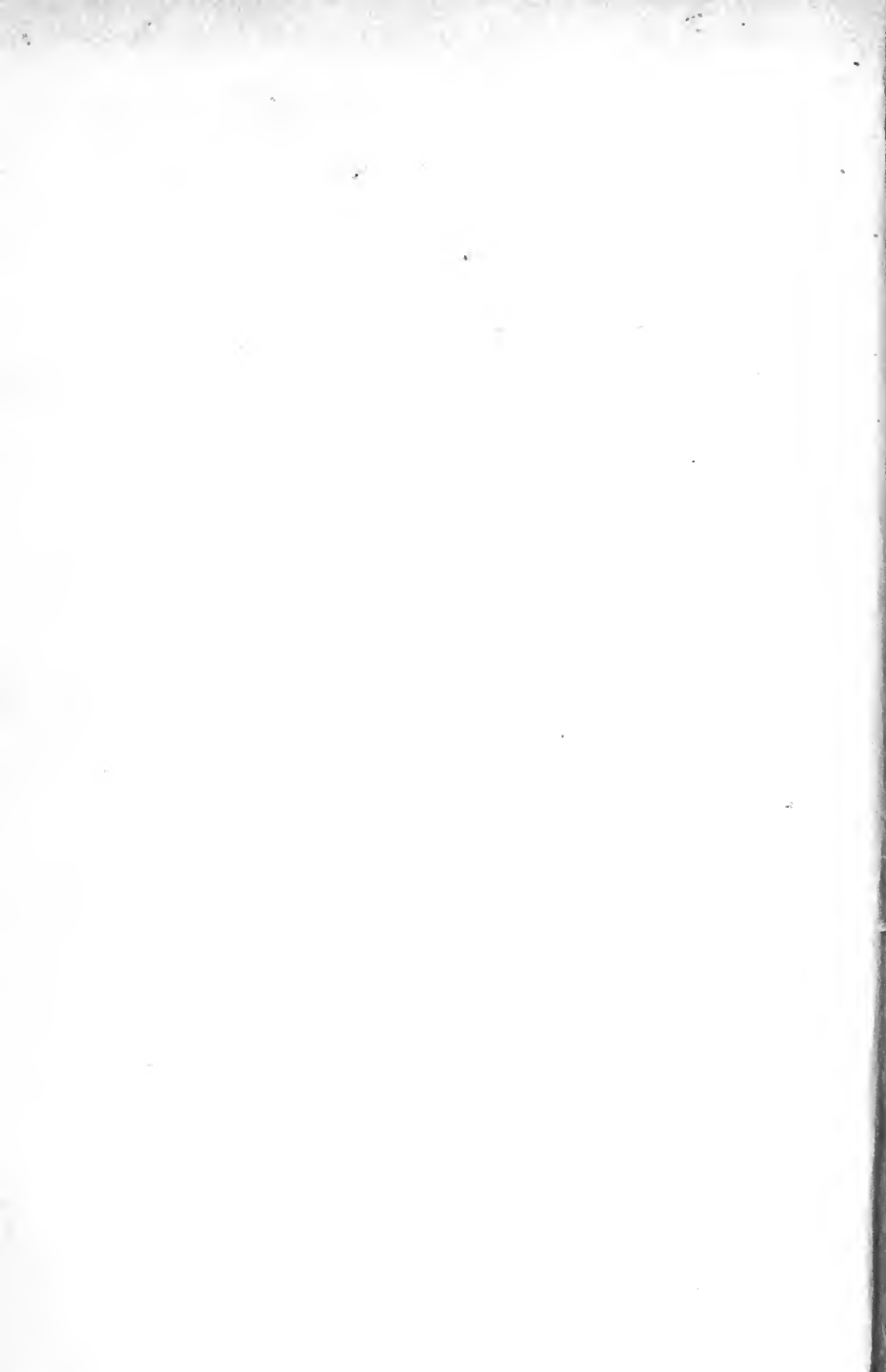
"I have labored more abundantly than they but not of myself and of my own powers but by the gratuitous aid of God. Thus it is we who, by our acts, by our solicitude, can fulfil the commandments and ought to run to the goal. But that which we do is the gift of God.'"

What striking concord on this point between the great Dominican Cardinal and the great Jesuit Cardinal. These champions of Catholic Christian truth are here seen to agree all along the line in interpreting St. Thomas, St. Augustine, and the Holy Scriptures on when and how the commandment to love God obliges and is fulfilled. This agreement is a satisfaction to the mind of the Catholic. For what could have caused these leaders of different schools who lived a whole century apart to agree so thoroughly on this doctrine? Only its manifest truth and evidence.









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