

UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



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SERMONS

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PREACHED IN ST. EDMUND'S
COLLEGE CHAPEL ON
VARIOUS OCCASIONS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

THE MOST REV. FRANCIS BOURNE,
ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER

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EDITORIAL NOTE

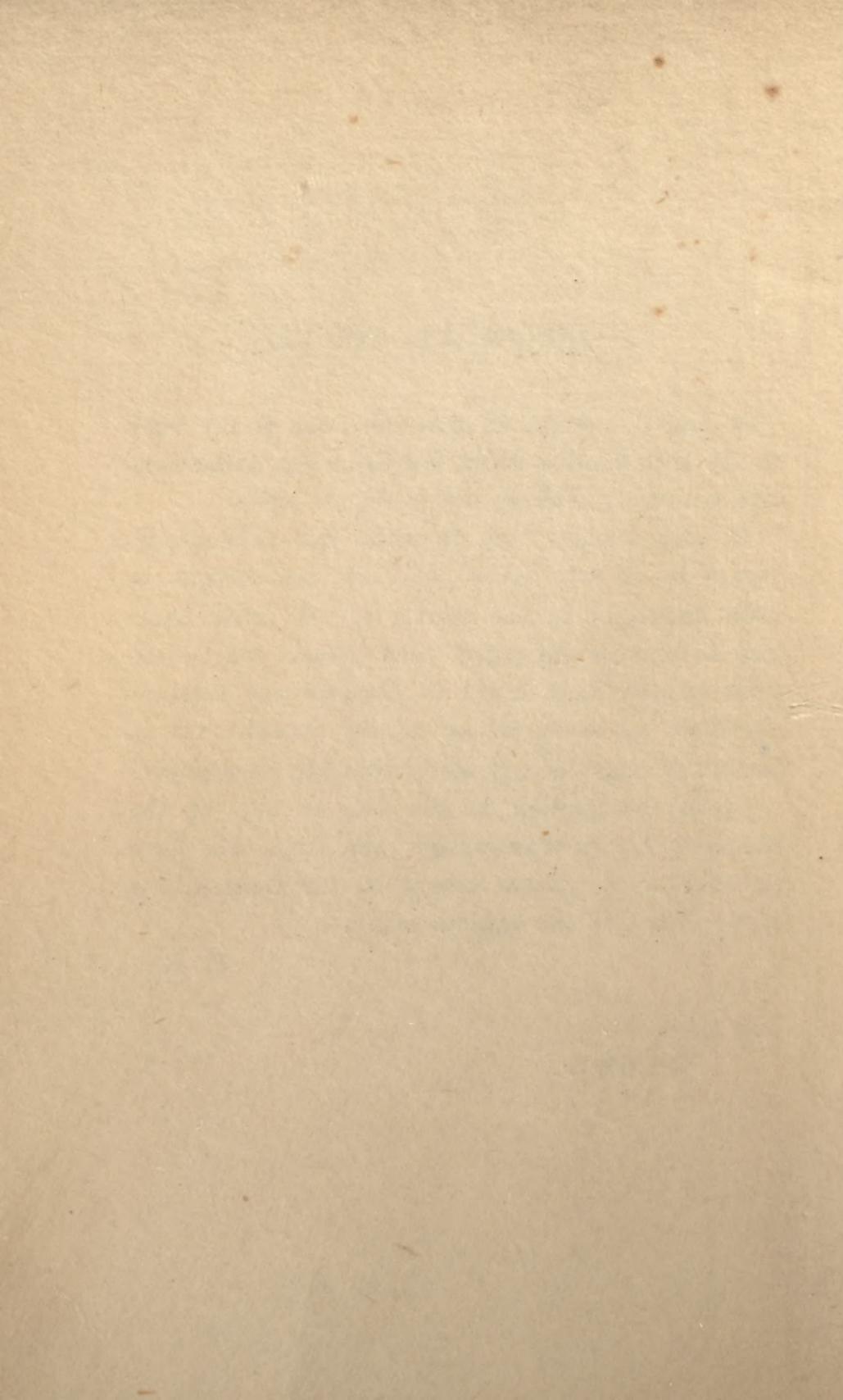
THE aim and scope of this collection is set forth in the Introduction which His Grace the Archbishop has, with such kindness, found time to write.

It only remains here to make due acknowledgments to all who have put their manuscripts or their copyright at the service of this little book, and to express our regret that diligent search and wide inquiry have failed to discover any sermons preached by some, whose names, though ever in honour amongst us, will not be found in these pages.

Special recognition is also due to two of the students, Henry Warner and John Page, who have devoted much patient labour to the transcription and collation of the various sermons.

E. B.

ST. EDMUND'S,
Sept. 1904.



INTRODUCTION

THE history of a school is in many ways like the life-story of a man. A school begins in weakness and obscurity; it must pass through many perils; its very existence will be, at least momentarily, in danger. Even when it has attained full growth, its strength will not always be maintained in the same degree. There will be moments of crisis, and periods of vicissitude. For many years it may have uninterrupted and growing success; then for a time it ceases to attract attention, and its existence is forgotten save by those whose affection and devotion are intimately bound up with its continuance. The resemblance of a school to a human life may be so complete as to find a termination to its career in a complete disappearance from all human activity. Schools, greater than any which we now possess, have done their work, and are now no more.

When we consider the history of a Catholic school, we may fairly seek the centre of all its usefulness in the Chapel where, not once a day, but many times, all, both teachers and taught, are gathered together before the throne of Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Not indeed that all the activity of the life of the school is concentrated there, but because therein all that is best and truest

and strongest in that activity finds its perennial source. We shall not, then, go far astray if we regard the history of the College Chapel as enshrining within itself a very true and accurate summary of the life of the school as a whole.

St. Edmund's College holds a large place in the history of the restoration of the Catholic Church in England. As far as the south of England is concerned, that place is quite unique, because for seventy years the great majority of the secular clergy in the south owed to St. Edmund's their whole clerical formation. It has been on this account a very wise inspiration to gather together the words spoken in the College Chapel on various memorable occasions during the already long, and by no means unchequered, history of the College. To the *alumni* these words will appeal with special force, recalling to them the story of the past, and bringing home to them, we trust, the need of constant devotion to the cause of their *Alma Mater*, so that her work and her renown in the future may not only equal but surpass all that she has so gloriously achieved in the last hundred years. But these pages will be of interest even to those who, though not in any way linked to the College by memories of boyhood, are concerned about those things which have made and now make for the well-being of the Catholic Church in England. All will be glad to know what sort of teaching was given in the College Chapel to those who were looking forward to a speedy entrance into the Master's Vineyard. The words of a great Bishop spoken before his Brethren, all of whom have now passed

to their rest, will be read anew and give forth a fresh significance when so many minds are occupied in considering how best to fit our students for the changing aspects of the ministry for which they are preparing. The centenary of the College, eleven years ago, recalled the past, and awakened many hopes and aspirations which it is well to remember, now that they are nearer to their realisation. We are all the better for knowing how those who claimed our veneration and affection while on earth, won that claim by a character formed amid the influences which the College Chapel ever exercises upon those who will accept its lessons. And throughout this book, from the beginning to the end, there is one prevailing thought, that of St. Edmund himself, whose name is ever recurring on these pages, and whose virtues form the subject of so many of the discourses which are collected herein. One lesson stands forth predominant and paramount—that the Edmundian spirit, if it be true and worth the name, must be none other than the spirit of St. Edmund himself, and that we have no right to call ourselves by that name, unless we be honestly striving to imitate the love of God and Church, the generosity, the unselfishness, the patient energy, the love of learning, the steadfastness, and the humility which are ever associated with our Patron's name.

The lesson comes very opportunely at this moment when St. Edmund's College is about to take up again the full work for which, at the cost of so many sacrifices, our forefathers brought it into being. As in the whole period of its existence, the College will give to those who desire to enter the ecclesiastical

state, all that they need for the general training of their mind and character, while it will still welcome among its scholars those who, though not called to the priestly ministry, are yet desirous of receiving that education which such a school, with great ecclesiastical traditions, is eminently qualified to give. But now again St. Edmund, by the means of the College dedicated to him, and filled, we trust and hope, ever more fully with his spirit, will teach the sacred sciences which were peculiarly his own. He must show us how on the one hand we are to cling to those old traditions which are the solid foundations of every work built up by God; and how, on the other hand, we are to read the signs of the times, and learn in what way we are to prepare for the due accomplishment of the mission entrusted to the ministers of God's Church here, in the twentieth century, in England. These sermons, collected in loving devotion to St. Edmund and the College, teach us a portion of the history of the past. May they stimulate all to renewed effort in the future, and may the future be blessed by St. Edmund even more abundantly than that first century of the existence of the College which has just closed.

✠ FRANCIS,

Archbishop of Westminster.

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THE SANCTITY OF THE CHRISTIAN VOCATION

A SERMON PREACHED IN ST. EDMUND'S COLLEGE CHAPEL,
ON THE FEAST OF ALL SAINTS, 1847,

BY THE REV. FREDERICK OAKELEY, M.A.

(Afterwards Canon of Westminster).

“Holiness, without which no man shall see God.”—HEB. xii. 14.

WHAT a great and wondrous solemnity, dear brethren, is this, of All the Saints! What a mystery, past thought or expression, is the life of any one Saint! What, then, shall be said of the aggregate of sanctity formed by the union, into one vast “cloud of witnesses” (Heb. xii. 1), of all those who, from the time of our Lord down to the present, have passed from the state of “much tribulation” to the blessed vision of God! Truly, as the stars of the firmament, when thickly multiplied, lose each its own particular identity, its own special lustre, and, all together, form a kind of luminous haze, sweet indeed to the eye, but suggesting the thought of untold and unfathomable wonders in the depths beyond, even so is the spiritual sight not so much dazzled as amazed by that galaxy of saintly brightness, the combined yet diversified fruits of the Holy Ghost in the elect of God, whom the Church on this

day presents to our loving contemplation, not singly, or in fraternal pairs, as at other times; not, as often, in associate companies, or even in any definite body; but as a "multitude which no man can number," without special qualities of sanctity to mark them, without even names to bring them to our remembrance.

One mode, then, of raising our conception of this great festival, is to reflect upon the wonders which are comprised in the thought of any single Saint. Take what Saint we will, no matter how monotonous and unchequered his history, so it be but the history of a Saint, and we shall feel how shallow, after all, is our insight into his spiritual being. Nay, how little even of any holy Christian is that which displays itself to the world, and even to his own circle of intimates! And why? Because, in the words of the Apostle, his life is hid with Christ in God (Col. iii. 3). Who shall fathom the depths of his devotion, or understand his inward conflicts? None but God alone is the sharer of our keenest griefs and fullest joys. The more any one advances in the spiritual life, the less is he known to the world; and thus, as the life of every Saint, even of those who are subjected to so jealous a scrutiny at their canonisation, is truly "hid with Christ in God," so is his memorial treasured up in the archives of heaven, to be disclosed at the last day, but not till then. And to-day we contemplate myriads upon myriads of such Saints, as various in character, as different in the circumstances among which they were thrown, as the uniformity of the operations of God's Holy

Spirit will allow; and we well know that this uniformity is no prejudice to that diversity—some called to propagate the Church, some to rule it; one traversing districts to spread the Faith, another hardly known beyond the precincts of his own monastery; some compelled, I had almost said condemned, to earthly greatness, others poor and despised, and all the happier in their obscurity; kings of the earth and all people, princes and all judges of the earth, young men and maidens, the old with the younger, “a vast multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues.”

But there is one point of view, already hinted at, considered in which the Festival of All Saints has an interest, which in such a subject becomes a mystery, especially its own. It is not merely a commemorative, it is also a supplementary Festival. The Church, as if weary of recording her individual Saints, or rather seeming to say, with the Apostle to the Hebrews (Heb. xi. 32), “The time would fail me” were I to speak of them all by name; hopeless of memorialising, yet fearful of excluding, assigns one of the latest days in her sacred calendar to the commemoration of All the Saints, as well those whom she has before celebrated, as those whom she has been constrained to omit. We know that every soul which passes hence without sinful taint or affection cleaving to it, is admitted at once to the blessed vision of God; not necessarily to one of those higher mansions of the heavenly courts which are won through signal sacrifices, lengthened

courses of labour, or extraordinary mortifications, yet still transcending, in an infinite degree, all our poor conceptions of happiness and glory. And the lowest in that most blessed kingdom is one of those Saints who pray for the Church, and whose piety the Church reciprocates by grateful and loving remembrance. Yes, beloved brethren, many and many are the Saints whose histories are forgotten, and whose very names are unknown. Rather, so naturally shrinking and unobtrusive is saintly virtue, that I would even say, the wonder is, that the memory of so many has been preserved. God would not leave us at least without some choice specimens of His celestial jewelry. He directed passers-by to go and find them out, when, but for some such interposition, we had overlooked their names, and lost the benefit of their examples. When glorious St. Ignatius, exhausted by his four days' abstinence from food, fell down at the entrance of his cave at Manresa, who was it but the Spirit of God, unwilling to let that treasure be lost to the Church, that prompted the charitable stranger to seek him out, and tend him till he recovered? ¹ When St. Francis Xavier, at the close of his Indian triumphs, fell sick and died on the sands of Sancian, unattended, unwept, and almost, in the Psalmist's very words, "without one to bury him" (Ps. lxxviii. 3), what but a Divine intimation disclosed the spot where the ownership of the neglected relics was soon attested by the witness of miraculous illustrations? ²

¹ See Bouhours' "Life of St. Ignatius of Loyola."

² See the Lives of St. Francis Xavier.

Still the glory of sanctity has always been denoted to the Church by specimens, and not in all its individual manifestations. Many have been they whose works have outlived their names. Many and many are there, who now receive in heaven the eternal recompense of labours and sacrifices unchronicled on earth; who are permitted to look down, from their celestial thrones, on the multiplied and successive fruits of their holy deeds. It may be that the reward of the Saints is continually and indefinitely increased by the accession of new triumphs to the Church, through the influence of their examples or of their works. They, says our Lord, who do their good actions to be seen by men, "have received their reward" (St. Matt. vi. 2), once for all, in that miserable distinction; they whose secret actions, though done to God alone, transpire, and are known in the Church, receive their reward both in heaven and on earth. But there are many whom God withholds from the knowledge even of the Saints on earth, as if to reserve for them a crown all the brighter in the celestial hierarchy. Where are the authors of those glorious and beautiful hymns, which, while they animate the devotion of the Church on earth, ascend, from year to year, and from age to age, as a kind of spiritual incense to the mercy-seat of God? Who framed the goodly mould to which our praises adapt themselves, when, lovingly and adoringly, at our Benedictions, or on the great Festival which they commemorate, we recount the origin of the Blessed Eucharist? Who was he that taught us, in accents of burning yet

withal most reverent affection, to hail the Star of the sea ; or again, to share the Mother's griefs at the foot of the Cross ? Who indited the prayers in holy Mass ? Who wrote our choicest books of devotion ? The authorship of some is unknown, of others but guessed, and of most controverted. And yet if sanctity can ever reveal itself by its acts, or be measured by its fruits, all these, and the like to these, have been numbered from the first in that heavenly company which we remember with honour and thankfulness to-day. And does not that company include also another class most dear to memory ? Are there none belonging to it, whom perhaps some among ourselves have known and loved ? Glorious deeds are not necessary to make the Saint withal, though of many Saints the deeds have verily been glorious. The fruits of genius, learning, and literary labour, although, when sanctified by the Spirit of God, among the surest instruments of edification, and therefore the most unfailling sources of heavenly reward, are but mere accidents of the saintly character. One necessary condition of glory in respect of earthly circumstances there is, as it should seem, and but one ; that it should be earned "through many tribulations" (Acts xiv. 21). But what shall be the particular sphere of this great trial ; whether the scene of the conflict shall be laid in the city or the village, the court or the cottage, the college or the monastery, at home or in a foreign land ; this is with God, who appoints to each his proper work in the Church, and gives to each his special gift, one after this

manner, and another after that. But if the sphere of sanctity be so large, its circumstances so various, and its opportunities, as we know them to be, common to all; how shall we doubt, how shall we not rather confidently, and, to our great comfort, acknowledge, that saints have been trained as well in peaceful homes as in the more public fields of the Christian warfare, and that the combat of which heaven is the prize, to be successful, needs to be conspicuous? For it is seen of Angels, though invisible to men. The Son of Sirach, after enumerating the rulers of the world, the preachers of righteousness, and the authors of sacred canticles, among the men of renown in the Church, and after adding that many have "no memorial," includes those who have "lived at peace in their houses" (Ecclus. xlv. 6).

This latter is a thought on which we may profitably dwell, in the way both of devotion and instruction. To speak first of its bearing on practice. We have much need, dear brethren, to remember that sanctity, without which, as the text says, none can be admitted to the vision of God, is a quality within the scope of our own aims, and the range of our own capacities. Are we not in danger of reading the Saints' lives, that is, the lives of the canonised Saints, as we might read books of travels, or even romances? Of excusing ourselves to ourselves from the obligation of imitating the Saints by the use of favourite maxims, none the less injurious to progress in spiritual perfection, because in a certain sense most true, nay, and, in their degree, even useful to be borne in mind? Such, for instance,

as that the Saints in many of their actions are rather to be admired than imitated ; that certain of their sacrifices were not so much the carrying out of evangelical counsels, as the result of some peculiar inspiration, wholly separating off their case from that of Christians in general. Or, again, to speak of a sentiment more dangerous still, and without the advantage of partial truth to recommend it, that what was right in the Saints is not necessarily, or even generally, right in us who are not saints—just as if the Apostle had not said that *all* Christians, *as such*, are “ called to be Saints ” (Rom. i. 7, &c).

That the lives of the Saints are to be studied with certain reserves, I am far from wishing to deny ; nay, and that actions are told of some Saints, which would be even wrong in this or that Christian ; as, for instance, what we read of some having studiously acted with the view of mortifying vainglory, in such a manner as to give colour to false and injurious suspicions against themselves. But let us beware of pleading the inapplicability of the particular *mode* in which certain Gospel principles are illustrated in the lives of some of the Saints, in extenuation of our obligation which, as Christians, is quite imperative, to aim at greater and greater progress in those principles ; many of them so repugnant to flesh and blood, and so odious to the unbelieving world. For example, to refer to the very instance just specified ; because, by the mercy of God, we are not required to provoke false imputations, and might even sin in wilfully incurring them, let us not therefore forget that it is often a means of perfection,

none the less certain because it is of course no duty of ordinary obligation, to be rather *patient of obloquies and misunderstandings than forward in self-vindication.*

In short, beloved brethren, let us learn from the Festival of to-day, that, in all its essential features, what Holy Scripture calls Sanctity, is not only within our reach, but is moreover the indispensable condition, as the text tells us, of arriving at the sight of God. Now, first, that it is within our reach, we are reminded, as in other ways, so especially by the circumstances of the present solemnity to which I have just adverted, namely, that it is a commemoration of other Saints besides those whose names are in the calendar of the Church. There may be those,—are there not those?—whom we have ourselves seen and known—those whose countenances are fresh in our recollections, or whose words still sound sweetly in our ears, who are now actually numbered among “All Saints.” There may be those now amongst ourselves, or within the circle of our own acquaintance, who this year celebrate this festival on earth, and the next may be included among those whom it is intended to honour. Who these have been, or may be, we cannot know without the Church’s warrant, but it is enough for our present purpose, that such there may be; and this thought surely brings the example of the Saints home to our very doors; and proves to us that the quality of that sanctity which we have pictured to our minds, perhaps in very humility, as something far above our reach, and therefore beside our aims, is in truth, at least in all essentials, a treasure

for which we have not far to search. And had it been permitted us to converse with some of those whose names are in the calendar itself, maybe they had not seemed of more unearthly mien than some whom we have seen or see. Yes, beloved brethren, it is in truth but a thin partition-wall which separates the holiest on earth from the glorified in heaven. Nought is wanted but one brief sifting, to transfer the ripened corn to the heavenly granaries; and this solemnity, far beyond any commemoration of single Saints, dismantles sanctity of all its merely romantic attributes, brings it down to the level of every Christian's capacities in grace, and shades off the difference between the glorified and the militant, till it seem hardly greater than between the two sides of the same circle.

Again, "without holiness no man shall see God." And what, beloved, is holiness? what is it but the especial quality of the Saints? Or, again, what is the perfection of heaven but something higher in degree, and not other in kind, than that of earth? Therefore, the Church to-day, after revealing, in the Epistle, the glory of God's celestial kingdom, descends in the Gospel to the qualities of sanctity—the terms on which alone that kingdom is given: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the clean of heart; for they shall see God. Rejoice when you are reviled; for your reward is very great in heaven" (Matt. v. 3-12). Alas, how many are there, even perchance among Catholic Christians themselves, who shrink from confronting the high and holy rule which our

Lord has bequeathed us ! We may not judge any one, and must rather take heed to ourselves, lest, with greater professions, we fall in practice short even of those who propose to themselves a lower standard. But let us beware that we overlook not what is actually required of us.

It is most true that all are not called to states of perfection ; but it is also true that all *are* called to aim at the perfection of the state in which God has placed them. Thus the married state is in itself less perfect than the single ; the merely ecclesiastical than that which involves the merit of the triple vow ; but, on the other hand, that is the highest state for each to which each is called of God. We are all, as we know, far happier and far nearer to God in the lower state, to which we are called (so it be lawful), than we should be in the higher, to which we have no call. Our reward, if we duly fulfil the obligations of that lower state, though less glorious, is not less certain, than is theirs who are called to the higher ; while we in the higher, if perchance higher than our own capacities, might even become reprobate. Every condition, then, may yield the fruits of sanctity, as every condition in times past has yielded them. There is a sanctity of the married, and a sanctity of the unmarried ; a sanctity of the poor, and a sanctity of the rich ; a sanctity of the priest, and a sanctity of the laic ; a sanctity of the religious, and a sanctity of the ecclesiastic ; a sanctity of the missionary, and a sanctity of the student. It is in all the same in essentials, in each peculiar in detail. For it is all

the working of One Spirit, dividing to every one according as He will. To particularise what is required of each would be impossible; what is possible, and may, by God's grace, be serviceable, is to point out some leading feature common to all sanctity, and illustrate it in some few ways applicable to the majority among ourselves.

Were I asked, then, to specify the pervading, or, at any rate, one of the most pervading attributes of all sanctity, the study of which is essential to any one who would labour after the perfection of his actual state, whatever that state may be, I should select this: Generosity in the service of God. You will find, beloved brethren, that all the Saints, whatever else they were, or were not, were clearly and beyond all question, *hearty and affectionate in the surrender of themselves to God*. David under the old, and St. Paul under the new dispensation, were illustrious specimens of this character; but never yet was there the Saint who had it not. A quality it is, so dear to God, that on account of it He will bear with even great defects, as in holy David; while on the other hand, the absence of this quality can be made up by no assemblage, however illustrious, of separate virtues. The Epistles of St. Paul abound in the traces of this noble spirit of devotion. But it is in the Psalms, beyond all other inspired books, that it pours itself out with the most unsparing profusion. Hence, perhaps, it is, that the Psalms have ever been so precious in the eyes of the Church; generosity is the spirit of the Church, and the Psalms comprise the language of Christian

nobleness. "Tu, Domine, suavis et mitis, et multæ misericordiæ omnibus invocantibus Te" (Ps. lxxxv. 5). "Domine, dilexi decorem domus Tuæ, et locum habitationis gloriæ Tuæ" (ib. xxv. 8). "Quomodo dilexi legem Tuam, Domine, tota die meditatio mea est" (ib. cxviii. 97). "Ideo dilexi mandata Tua, super aurum et topazion; propterea ad omnia mandata Tua dirigebar; omnem viam iniquam odio habui" (ib. vv. 127, 128). These sentiments, chosen almost at random from the Psalms in most frequent use amongst ourselves, will explain what I mean by Christian generosity. And even those of the Psalms which, to our cold hearts and fastidious ears, may sound over-severe, are but outpourings of the same temper. For, to hate God's enemies, so far, that is, and so far only, as they are His enemies, with a "perfect hatred" (Ps. cxxxviii. 22), is surely but the natural result of loving Him with a perfect love. This ardour of generous and devoted affection it is which gives to sanctity, when manifested in an active sphere, so noble an aspect of enterprise and enthusiasm. To describe the spirit in question by a single word, it is what in human subjects we call *loyalty*. The cross is its ensign, the hymns of the Church are its war-songs; and here is the principle of its life, and the secret of its power: "Let us love God, because God hath first loved us" (1 St. John iv. 19). Our Lord gave Himself *wholly* for us; shall we return the gift by some grudging tribute, or honour Him with some mutilated sacrifice? And yet, dear brethren, this saintly principle of action, all energetic and aspiring

though it seems, has its sphere and its scope elsewhere than in busy scenes and conspicuous enterprises. Were it not of universal operation; were it indeed tied down to place, or set of circumstances, or state of life, then were it no invariable attribute of sanctity; for sanctity, we have seen, has no special province, no bounded range. Generous devotion, loyal enthusiasm, heroic enterprise—these, it is true, are terms of lofty sound, and tumultuous association. Yet think not, beloved, that they impart ideas at variance with that gentleness and peace which are so congenial to the mind of the Church, and the minds of many among yourselves. In the world it may be so, but in the Church the spirit of enterprise is ever held in check by principles of counterpoise and counteraction quite sufficient to moderate its effects without impairing its intensity; insomuch that the house of novices is as favourable a scene for its exercise as the missionary campaign; the college, with its even round of noiseless duties, as the city, with its opportunities of active labour and heroic charity. For in retirement, as in public life, there is the same world to be conquered, and the same heaven to be gained through tribulation.

Is there, then, beloved brethren, no scope for this saintly spirit of generosity and self-surrender in our own state of life, tranquil though it be, and, as the world might say, monotonous? On the contrary, there is the very greatest; and I will conclude by pointing out, if I may, for our mutual edification, what appear to be some of the shapes in which that spirit will be apt to display itself in

such a state of circumstances as our own. In the first place, we, and all Christians, in whatever condition, may undoubtedly turn to the best possible account the actual opportunities of our state, be they more or fewer; and the greatest Saints have done no more. By using the opportunities of our state, I mean, of course, that we should not study to do the least that is possible without reproach, but, on the contrary, that we should aim at the most which our circumstances will allow; not easily making excuses for negligence, or taking ready advantage of the forbearance of superiors; but looking on rules, even where tenderly enforced, as precious means of discipline, and steps in the way to heaven, which if slighted, can never be regained; not putting off to a more convenient season the cultivation of religious habits, which are as practicable at one time as another; not inquiring how much can be done in the way of licence, or omitted in the way of duty, without incurring actual sin, but rather considering how little may safely be left undone by those who are in pursuit of Christian perfection; not, in short, taking our standard of practice from the lenient, because remedial, law of the Confessional, but rather pre-occupying our minds with the high maxims of didactic and ascetical morality.

To deal with the inestimable opportunities which we now enjoy in too calculating and parsimonious a spirit, although it might involve no positive, at least no mortal sin, would surely be quite at variance with that generous and loyal affection to our Lord

which is inseparable from the saintly mind. For let us consider, that of every regulation of discipline, and of every gracious adaptation of circumstances to our wants for the time being, our Lord is certainly the Author, though His will be made known to us through the instrumentality of human agents; and then let us ask ourselves, in what spirit the loving child is accustomed to accept a rule of conduct at the hands of the watchful and most indulgent parent?

But again, if all the means of self-discipline be likewise opportunities of affectionate devotion, what shall we not say of our more directly religious advantages, of our periodical calls to prayer, our daily Sacrifice and frequent Communions, and the Presence of our Lord, at all hours, blessing us from His altar? What opportunities are here of costly sacrifices, heroic purposes, uncompromising surrenders, and effectual propitiations, I have rather, my beloved brethren, to learn from your example, than to press on your devout attention.

Nor, again, need I tell you, except indeed with the view of reminding myself, that our actual state of life, as ecclesiastical persons, while in itself it forms one great sacrifice, so does it also, and by consequence, depend for its vigour upon a series of daily mortifications. We have not only renounced the pleasures of sense and of the world, in becoming priests, or ministers, or students for the Church, but we have thereby pledged ourselves to a continual course of lesser sacrifices in the same department. Our state without its spirit is far worse than an empty name, it is a chain, which would drag us down to perdition;

and the preservation of its spirit depends wholly on our keeping a jealous watch on all its obligations, and cultivating the tempers which lie at the root of its characteristic virtues. Hardy habits, careful punctuality and exactitude in the performance of all our duties, and at proper times "silence even from good things"; all these maxims and rules of ecclesiastical life tend, in different, but undoubted ways, to foster that sensitive cleanness of heart which is the very life and soul of our high vocation. Although, by God's mercy, that rich jewel of chastity were not ultimately to be tarnished by many an involuntary, and even voluntary failure in strict watchfulness, yet certain it is that each purposed breach of discipline, each precious moment squandered in idleness, or wasted in needless recreation or repose, each summons to prayer or study unheeded, or taken at leisure when it should be obeyed at once; every roving imagination, and every idle word, has a tendency to draw us aside from the path of perfection, to which we have spontaneously pledged ourselves in vowing ecclesiastical life. That path, dear brethren, is easily missed, and hardly recovered; but it shines more and more brightly as it comes nearer the day, and its certain end, for those who will courageously follow it out, is in the highest among the mansions of our Lord's eternal kingdom.

And if, beloved brethren, our life should sometimes seem a weariness, and duty hard, and sacrifice painful, let us remember that this, after all, but proves it to be the way of the Saints. Let us con-

sider that those who are clothed in white robes, and who fall down before the throne, are described by the Ancient, as "they who were come out of *much tribulations.*"

Let us meditate on the words of our Lord in the Gospel of this day: "Beati qui *lugent*, quia consolabuntur." Let us think, too, what Saints have said, who from their state of blessedness have stooped to cheer their former fellow-travellers along the way of the Cross. "Could you but know," said St. Peter of Alcantara to St. Teresa, in a vision after his death, "what you gain or lose, accordingly as you follow God's will or your own!" Oh, how sweet will it be, this short life over, to be embraced by the Saints above; to see face to face, and to know as intimates, those whom a veil of mystery now conceals from our sight; to know better whom here we have known but imperfectly; to know where as yet we know not; to thank our Patrons and Angel Guardian for all their good care of us, and enter into the glory, which we owe to their protection and the intercession of all our heavenly friends; to behold, more than all, the glorious and most blessed Mother of God—that sight, one glance of which, indulged in misty dream or fleeting vision, has sufficed, ere now, to win hardened sinners from the allurements of the world, and bind them for ever to their God; to see Angels, and Apostles, and Martyrs, and Confessors, and Virgins, with their Queen; and be led by them up to the throne of the Lamb, and there unite with them in their acts of adoration and their canticles

of praise—even that victorious song, whose notes were once echoed on earth : “ Benediction, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and strength, to our God, for ever and ever. Amen.”

THE HOLY GHOST

A SERMON PREACHED IN ST. EDMUND'S COLLEGE CHAPEL,
ON WHITSUNDAY, 1853,

BY REV. FREDERICK RYMER, D.D.

“Come, O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of thy faithful, and enkindle within them the fire of thy love.”

ALAS! this oft-repeated prayer, how carelessly is it uttered, with how little attention to the greatness of the favour we ask! We begin our supplication to God the Father with the invocation of the Holy Spirit to the end that He would teach us how to pray; we begin our studies with the self-same prayer to the end that the Holy Spirit would impart to us His own peculiar gifts—the spirit of wisdom and understanding. It is but conformable to the weakness of our human nature, that what is often repeated should make but little impression upon us, and lose its importance in our eyes. And thus it happens in the case before us. We almost hourly beg the assistance of the Holy Spirit to direct us in all the actions of the day, but we beg as though we cared not for what we ask. We are either indifferent to the favour, or we are not alive to our necessities. And of us it may be truly said as it was of the sons of Zebedee, though in another sense,

“that we know not what we ask.” But, my dear brethren, if we reflect at all on the subject we shall acknowledge that the gift of the Holy Ghost is a great gift—great in itself and great in its effects. It is great in itself, for Almighty God intended it to be the perfection of all His other gifts, and by it to set the seal, as it were, upon the great work of our redemption which was begun and well-nigh completed by the Incarnation and Passion and death of His only Son. There is, too, an opinion of theologians that in the Sacrament of Confirmation the Holy Ghost descends really and personally, and not merely spiritually, into the hearts of the faithful. And if so, what a close resemblance is thus established, both in dignity and mode, to that which we receive in the Adorable Sacrament of the Altar.

It is great too in its effects; and if we could study them, we have but to take a rapid glance at the disciples, timid, ignorant, and *weak* in virtue, in the *cenacle* of Jerusalem, whither they have retired through fear of the Jews, and then to *view* them after the descent of the Holy Spirit, as with rapid step they speed their way over the whole world, announcing the faith to barbarous nations, humbling the pride of philosophers, overturning the altars of the Gentiles, standing undaunted in the presence of potentates and emperors, and shedding their blood in defence of the truth.

Less visibly but not less really than He descended upon the Apostles on the first Whitsunday, is the Holy Spirit prepared to descend into our souls and to work in them similar effects. “Come then, O Holy

Spirit, fill the hearts of thy faithful and enkindle within them the fire of thy Love.”

Amongst the many gifts and fruits which the Holy Spirit either imparts or brings forth in our souls, there are two upon which I wish to address you in particular this morning, and these are the gift of fortitude and the fruit of charity. We have need of both, of the one to make us persevere in the practice of good, and of the other to help us to give perfection to the good that we do. If good intentions, my dear brethren, would carry us far in the path of charity, how near the goal should we be! When our hearts have been warmed by the fire of meditation, or like molten wax have become softened and susceptible of every impression by the exercises of a spiritual retreat; or when with no effort on our part, and with no apparent cause the secret inspiration of God has descended like a gentle dew to fertilise our hearts, and when He tenderly appeals to our affections in a way that He alone knows how to speak, how easy then is it to resolve great things for His honour. In our imagination we then do battle with our foes, and it costs us little to lay them prostrate; it is easy then to avoid the occasions of sin, and to lay aside without regret *inveterate* evil habits. But who does not know that this is all a delusion, and that, generally speaking, our good resolves produce but little effect on our lives. Sometimes we go from prayer and never once reflect upon the good we have resolved. The devil comes and tempts us as before. And we fall his victims as easily as before. At other times our good resolutions do

produce some effect. But how rarely is it lasting. The impression which eternal truths or the motion of grace has made in our hearts has been deep and cannot be immediately effaced. We struggle for a while against our evil habits, we enter upon a career of fervour and punctuality in the discharge of our duties, and are faithful in the performance of the exercises of piety which we have enjoined ourselves ; and would that all this were lasting ! But by-and-by, and generally a very brief time is sufficient, and the vivid impressions begin to grow dim, fainter and fainter they become as the days roll on, until at last they become almost effaced. Then we grow weary of our religious exercises ; at first it is only weariness, then comes disgust, and then we abandon some on the plea that they are more than our strength can bear, more than we shall have the resolution to continue. *Some* have been abandoned, then follow others, until after a little while scarcely a vestige is left of all that we had promised. This is the devil's first step to victory. We have come out of our stronghold and laid ourselves bare to his attack. Temptations follow. They are small at first. The devil seeks no more at first than to induce us to return to occasions of sin that we had abandoned, or to seek once more the companionship of those whose society is dangerous, or at least suggests temptations to sin that is no more than venial. Then we yield, and yield without much remorse. Sin begets sin, and an old habit is soon revived and we are very soon just where we were before, none the better, perhaps even worse for the good resolutions we made.

I speak not against the practice of making good resolutions, but against the neglect of good resolutions. And whence proceeds this neglect? Of course in great measure from the innate difficulty there is in perseverance. For it is a hard thing ever to go on in the same even tenor of life, daily going through the same round of duties and the same exercises of piety without intermission. Still harder is it to persevere when we find no relish in spiritual duties, and when prayer and Communion, which ought most to cheer our hearts, produce nothing but weariness and disgust. But believe me, my dear brethren, this is no unusual trial of God's servants, it is the test of genuine love, and happy are they who pass unscathed through this ordeal, and who, like pure gold, come out all the brighter for having been cast into the furnace. But there is another reason for our falling back, and it is that we have not prayed fervently to the Holy Spirit for the gift of fortitude. *Ours* is the spirit of weakness and pusillanimity; and when we go forth confiding in our own strength, it is no wonder that we faint on the way before we reach the mountain of God. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of strength, and did we but pray earnestly and perseveringly for this Spirit to descend into our hearts then how different would be the result! then our lives would be no longer a history of resolutions made and broken, but one of progress from virtue to virtue until we have become perfect men.

Let us now view this virtue of fortitude under another of its many aspects. By all it is admitted that one of the peculiar difficulties of our state of

life—I mean that of the priesthood—is that we are obliged to be *in* the world and yet not *of* the world. The world, you know it, has maxims, sentiments, and a conduct of its own, and the Gospel has its maxims, sentiments, and rules. Did they agree, it would be an easy thing to live in the world and yet follow out the Gospel precepts. But they are enemies the one to the other, their sentiments are diametrically opposite, and to follow the world is to forsake the Gospel and its Author, and to live to the world is to die to God ; yet how easy it is to be seduced by the world, and on the other hand, how hard, how impossible to human weakness, to stand firm against its varied influences. To many it is no small temptation to live amid the pleasures of the world and to behold others enjoying them whilst themselves must adhere to the rigidity of the Gospel and to the severity of the Christian priesthood, for the priest's life must be one of mortification and self-denial, and if he would attend to the things of God and the necessities of his people, he must withdraw himself from the pleasures of the world. It is a hard trial to most, constantly to hear and not to be influenced by the opinions expressed by men of the world, and not to be carried away by the estimate they form of things, but on the contrary to raise one's voice in opposition to theirs, and make the maxims of the Gospel triumph over those of the world. And hardest of all is it not to be carried away by the torrent of human customs. The danger to the priest of forgetting his exalted character and making himself in all things like to men of the world

is not perhaps the danger that he has most to fear. There is another danger, and few are they who have passed it unhurt, and it is the danger lest the influence of worldly sentiments and worldly example should make us avert our eyes from the high standard of virtue at which we ought to aim ; it is not so much the danger of abandoning altogether the path of virtue as that of proving remiss ; of neglecting meditation and other such exercises of a priestly life, and of never striving to ascend above mediocrity.

And what is the value of the priest who does not aspire to perfection ? Oh ! torrent of human custom. Oh ! curse of bad example, not merely to the priest but to one and all of us, my dear brethren. How many are they who have left the hallowed precincts of a college, and for a while have preserved their virtue, and then after a few brief months have fallen away. They have wished to be like others, and it has been their aim and even their ambition to be "like the rest of men," and because most men indulge in pleasures, and it matters not whether they be innocent or criminal, they will do so too. And because most men seldom approach the Sacraments of Confession and Communion, they too seldom cleanse their souls at the sacred tribunal, and seldom participate of the body and blood of Christ. Like a rushing torrent that at one sweep bursts through its barriers, carrying down in its course no less the huge rock than the fragile reed, so human custom sometimes at once prevails over long - confirmed virtue and carries away the strong no less than the weak, whilst at other times it is like a gentle stream,

by degrees only effacing former impressions, but still as certain and as effectual in its operations.

The danger to us all is great, and we have need of great strength to stem the torrent. But let us remember when we are tempted to do as others do that awful sentence of our Saviour that, "Many are called but few chosen." That most men are consequently rushing headlong to perdition, and that to imitate them and their conduct is to follow them to destruction. This opposition, then, to the world and this profession of the Gospel maxims, not in mere words but in practice, despite the maxims and sneers of the world, is our martyrdom. The sword of steel has long been sheathed, and we are no longer called upon at the command of tyrants to sacrifice our faith, but the sword is still drawn and persecution still rages against the precepts of the Gospel, and at the bidding of every worldling we are called upon to sacrifice our virtue. The spirit of fortitude descended of old to give strength to the martyrs of faith, and to-day is ready to descend and strengthen us whose call it is to be martyrs to the precepts of morality. The danger is not light, and therefore the more fervent ought to be our prayer for the gift of fortitude.

The fruit of the spirit is charity. There is a beautiful virtue that is distinct from all other virtues and reigns as queen amongst them all. The soul which it beautifies shines lustrous as the heavenly spirits, and every dark spot of sin disappears in its light. It is a golden link that unites man indissolubly to God, and its name is charity. Scarcely

less beautiful is it when viewed in its relation to man with man, breathing peace amongst the discordant elements of our nature and calming the troubled waves of passion, envy, and hatred. But I speak not of charity as a virtue distinct from all other virtues, but as a virtue which exercises its sweet influence over every one of our ordinary actions, imparting to them all a share of its own excellence and splendour. My dear brethren, I need not tell you that there is a great difference between our virtuous actions. But the important question is, What gives to our virtuous actions their peculiar degree of merit, that distinguishes them from each other and renders some so acceptable to God, whilst others gain but little favour in His sight? From a philosophical point of view all our actions are in themselves equally unworthy of the infinite majesty of God, and in His infinitude He must regard them all in themselves as alike indifferent. But not so, the love, the charity, that prompts and directs them. Beyond all things He prizes our love and every expression of that love, and love it is that gives a character and worth to our actions. What is in itself indifferent, by love is changed into virtue, and an act of ordinary virtue when purified in the furnace of love may be converted into an act of heroic sanctity. For what else was it but her ardent charity that gave such value to the widow's mite and made it far surpass in merit the gold and silver offerings of the rich? Is not this thought replete with comfort?

It does not often happen that we can do any-

thing great for God. Our life is made up of trivialities. The world will not miss us when we have passed away, nor would it have been much the worse if we had never played our part in its history. God's economy and the eternal decrees of His Providence would not have been materially altered had we never been called into life and action. So unimportant is all that we do and all that we are ! Yet we may impart a dignity and importance not merely before men, but even in the eyes of God, to every single act that we perform by performing it in the spirit of love. Let a tender love prompt it and a tender love accompany it, and that action, be it of prayer or study, pleasure or recreation, or even eating or drinking, will ascend as a sweet offering to God, and merit for us an eternity of glory. Does this seem strange ? or has it not its counterpart in nature ? What is the present from a friend we esteem the most ? Is it that which possesses the greatest intrinsic worth, or that which is given with the greatest affection ? What is it that lends a value to the simple offering of a child to its mother but the pure, fond, tender love that accompanies it ? Oh ! how true is that saying of St. Augustine's, " Provided you love, you may do what you will." For we cannot act from love and at the same time offend God.

We may press the application of this principle still further, and assert that whatever we do from love is thereby changed into an act of virtue, and in proportion to the ardour of our love is the excellence and merit of our action. Is not this

an important principle, and one that merits our attention? Come then, O Holy Spirit, and enkindle in our hearts the fire of Thy love. May we ever act and speak, and think and breathe through love, and thus will every thought and word and action be a dart piercing the heart of our Beloved, and a fresh link binding us more closely to Him.

In speaking to you, my dear brethren, upon the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, there is a thought suggested to me by the present occasion, and one not foreign to my subject. I address you in this Chapel and from this pulpit for the last time. How many are the recollections that crowd upon the mind in bidding farewell to these sacred walls! How many are the missionaries who have gone forth from this place to spend their health and their strength toiling for the salvation of sinners! How many are they who have prostrated within that sanctuary, plighting their faith to a heavenly Lover and burning to have no other Spouse but Him! How many who have received the imposition of hands and retired with their souls stamped with the tremendous seal of the priesthood, objects of envy to the eyes of angels and of endearment to the eyes of God! How many the sacrifices that have ascended from that altar, invoking the mercy of God upon the living and the dead, and averting His wrath and indignation from sinners! How many could we number who have knelt in the places which we now occupy, and have passed to the house of their eternity! There are recollections, too, not of others but of

ourselves, of the resolutions we have made in this Chapel, of tears that have fallen from our eyes when we returned to God after wandering far from Him, of tender affections breathed to our sweet Saviour when we knelt before Him in solitude, paying Him our daily visit in the Blessed Sacrament. But we may not dwell on these things. The thoughts, however, should be more than merely suggestive of former times and former doings. They ought to kindle in our breasts a fervent gratitude for all the graces we have received in this Chapel. Oh! those graces—and who shall number them?—that have been so unthankfully received, and so wantonly abused! Who shall recount them? The grace of holy retreats, of instructions, of meditations, the grace of assisting daily at the sacrifice where Jesus Christ was our victim on the altar—and more than all the graces that have continually flowed from that Tabernacle—they have flowed on and ceased not either by day or by night, they have flowed on and given us strength; even when we were far away and had no thought of this Chapel, grace has still reached us from the Tabernacle, spreading its sweet influence over us. Oh! my dearest brethren, tongue cannot tell you the value of a single one of those ceaselessly flowing graces, and how can it describe the worth of the aggregate of them all? Is not the present then an occasion to call forth our tears for the little use we have made of these graces, and of gratitude to that loving Saviour who has so watched over us from this His holy dwelling-place?

I do not mean to dwell longer on this sub-

ject. It is sufficient for me to have given a tone and direction to your thoughts on this occasion. And may the Holy Spirit make choice for His dwelling-place of the new Tabernacle as He has done of the old, and in proportion as its splendour surpasses that of the old, in the same proportion may He shower down more plenteously and more richly His gifts and graces on our souls, and more especially the gift of fortitude and the fruit of charity. Amen.

This sermon was the last preached in the "Old Chapel."

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY GHOST

A SERMON PREACHED IN ST. EDMUND'S COLLEGE CHAPEL,
ON WHITSUNDAY, 1856,

BY REV. HERBERT VAUGHAN, D.D., VICE-PRESIDENT
(Afterwards Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster).

THE Blessed Trinity is an inexplicable mystery in each of the Three Divine Persons who form it. We are not to expect, by study or speculation, to fold back the veil that is spread before us, or to penetrate into Its mysterious and eternal life and existence. It is a mystery of wonder and ineffable support to our feeble life on earth. To gaze upon it as it is, and to be lost in it, is to be the sum of our fulness and happiness when our temporal shall have passed into our eternal life. Trinity is the name of God's life, as He has vouchsafed to make it known to us; it is the state of His existence revealed, in order that reason may bow down and faith rise up, bringing in her suite hope, then charity, three marvellous operations of the Three Divine Persons by which our souls become translated into the inaccessible light of God, and become the associates of the boundless, fathomless happiness of the eternal and self-existent life. We are not, then, about to search into the nature of the Blessed Trinity, fearing

the words, "he that is a searcher of majesty shall be overwhelmed by glory" (Prov. xxv. 27). Nor do I propose, my brethren, to tell you all that God has revealed about Himself in the theology of the Church. I am first going to ask you to look in upon yourselves as the image of the Blessed Trinity, and then to consider how upon two accounts especially you should labour to acquire an active love and reverence for that Divine Spirit of God, who is at the same time *fons vivus, ignis, charitas, et spiritualis unctio*. So perfectly do the Three Divine Persons of the Most Holy Trinity love themselves and each other, so infinitely sufficient is their self-existent and absorbing life, that even their external acts have nothing original, but are ever, in some more or less perfect manner, representations of the Creator's being or of His glory. The business of Creation is to pour forth the praises of the Creator. And this glory is secured in everything from the noblest seraph to the thin grass that is waving against the wall, or the moss that grows within its fissures. And if all the creations of the first five days pourtray the glory of God, *Cæli enarrant gloriam Dei*, what shall we say when we come to those words which God used with Himself when the Three Divine Persons spoke simultaneously—one God—in that sixth day or period, "Let Us make man to Our own image and likeness"? "Let Us Three Divine Persons complete Our Creation by making a man, and seal him to Our own image and likeness." Those who lord it in the world cover their servants with their liveries and their hereditary arms, but the Creator has entered

deeper than the surface, and in the very heat of His first creation, while man was being formed, ere the wax was yet cool, God pressed into his soul the Divine seal of His hand, and that seal was no other than the perfect image of the Triune Deity. The soul of man was cast as an image of its Creator. It is three and yet one. It has power of intelligence, reason, and will. And from its power of intelligence is generated, in a way, its word or its thought, and from its power of intelligence and its word proceeds its love, existing in its will. It has, too, a life of action *within*, and a power of communicating itself, and of action *without*. And yet these three powers of the soul are but one soul, simple, spiritual, and indivisible.

Such then, in a few words, is the image of Himself that God has been pleased to form in your soul in its first creation. Your glory and pride, O man, should be not in any intrinsic power or beauty of your soul or body, but in this, that you are the living portrait, the true image of the Trinity, having the peculiar character of each of the Divine Persons stamped upon you, and then that you are bid stand out in the midst of creation, the witness and the preacher of His power, wisdom, and sanctity. But what shall I say when man by his perversity and sin well-nigh wiped out of his soul that wondrous image that had been engraven on it? What may I say when I have told you that with deliberation he cast round his powers the heavy chain of sin, darkened and clouded his intelligence, confounded the operations of his soul, and banished from his will the

Divine gift of goodness? What shall I say when I tell you that he who was the witness and preacher deserted his high calling and enlisted in the very ranks of the enemy, going over to Satan? My dear brethren, it is not for me to say what course the human heart would have suggested. I am here to proclaim that the ever Blessed Trinity, lifting up man from the dunghill, again said, "Let us make man to our own image and likeness," and in a second creation renewed the old man, purging out the old, "according to the image of Him that created him" (Col. iii. 10). He imprinted on him again the seal of His Divine Attributes, but in a more impressive and Divine way, burning it into the soul with marks and sacramental character which shall endure for the Eternal Years. God stooped to fallen man, took again into His own hands the work of which the enemy had robbed Him; He elevated it into a higher sphere, in it He sanctifies and perfects it, He draws it nearer to Himself and makes it more than ever the image of Himself. And thus it was, dear brethren, that you were baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and raised to a higher order and are sanctified in that order.

How has the Blessed Trinity acted in your soul in this second creation? Has not the Father given you faith, the Son hope, and the Holy Ghost charity, which is spread abroad in your hearts? Hear the Scriptures. Jesus Christ, when speaking of Faith, says, "No man can come to Me (have faith in Me) unless the Father who hath sent Me draw him" (John vi. 44). From the Father therefore we have re-

ceived our faith. Whence have we our hope? It is from Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, "Who according to His great mercy hath regenerated us into a lively hope." In what could be our hope, in whose bosom should it be lodged save in that Divine Incarnate Person who alone had power to ransom and redeem us miserable men, who had been led away into worse than Babylonian slavery and darkness? The Apostle said, "Patience worketh trial and trial hope." What was the life of the Word upon earth but one of suffering and trial producing hope—producing a hope not for Himself, but a hope which He hath communicated to us. And then sublimely bringing out our very doctrine, the Apostle continues, "And hope confoundeth not." Why? because the charity of God is poured forth into our hearts, by "the Holy Ghost who is given us" (Rom. v. 5). And now we see that our gift of charity is an unction from the Holy Ghost poured over us.

In the first creation it was the Father who commanded, it was by the Logos or Word that all things were made, and through the Holy Spirit that they all seemed, and were, good. So as in the second creation it was the Father who sent the Son, it was the Son who came and redeemed us; and it was the Holy Ghost, the living spirit of them both, making us cry out from our hearts to the First, Abba Father, and to the Second, Christ Jesus, Anointed Redeemer.

In the first creation you were created not to the likeness of one Person only, but of three, in your intelligence, reason, and will; and in the second

creation you are formed more distinctly and more sublimely to the likeness of the eternal Blessed Three, in faith, hope, and charity. And if between that terrible fall and the redemption our fate was for a moment in suspense, it was the Father who was Justice, the Son, Peace, and it was the Holy Ghost whose love knew how to make them kiss. Or if you will look at God and man from another point, you would say that creation, redemption, and sanctification are respectively the attributes of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that the grand devotion of Adam in his integrity might have been to the Father, that that of the patriarchs and prophets would have been to the Eternal Son, and that the special devotion of those who have been, not only created and redeemed, but built in a peculiar manner since the Day of Pentecost, into temples and dwellings of the Holy Spirit, should be to the Holy Ghost.

Now Pentecost perseveres unto this day—it is ever continuing. Its work of sanctification excelled creation and redemption as charity excels faith and hope. It renders us superior to the Ancients. Our Faith has never been more excellent or more steadfast than that of our forefathers. “By faith Abel offered sacrifices to God and obtained a testimony that he was just; by faith Henoch was translated; by faith Abraham went out not knowing whither he went; by faith also Sara herself, being barren, received strength to conceive seed as the stars of the heaven in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable. And all these died according to faith, not having received the promises,

but by faith beholding them afar off and saluting them, and confessing that they are pilgrims and strangers on the earth. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down; by faith kingdoms were conquered; the mouths of lions stopped; armies of foreigners put to flight." The faith of modern saints has never surpassed that of the Ancients. And as to hope, our forefathers excelled us in this hope, they had double hope: hope in the advent of the Redeemer, and hope in His merits whenever He should come. But we have less hope: we have not to hope in His coming; He has already come, and we hope only in His infinite merits, in which they also put their trust. Was it not by hope as well as by faith that "others were racked, not accepting deliverance . . . and others had trials of mockeries and stripes, also of bands and prisons; they were stoned, they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword, they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being in want, distressed and afflicted? And all these . . . received not the promise, God providing some better thing for us, that they should not be perfected without us."

What is that better thing? the gift of the Spirit, the charity of Pentecost, of which we have received that they should not be perfected without us. Until the day of Pentecost the new creation had remained imperfect and incomplete, in faith and hope. It was as the sun in the heavens, but without light and heat. The fire and light of charity had not till then been imparted to it; but it has now through the accretion of charity become a perfect orb, a glorious sun,

bright and burnished in the golden rays of charity. Since the days of Pentecost have been accomplished, nothing more has been wanting to the perfection and harmony of this new creation; the measure has been filled up; a glorious creation, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish, has come forth, because the Spirit of God has been poured out over His people.

It is very important that we should bear in mind that the work of the Holy Ghost is the perfecting of the new creation of grace. Had He not come, we should have been a lingering blossom and a retarded fruit. But the work of God is ever unfolding and advancing, until it terminates in its true perfection. Such then, dear brethren, has been the attribute of the Holy Spirit, "to fill the whole orb of the earth," and to open over faith and hope the floodgates of His fruitful charity.

And now, my brethren, let me ask you this question, How is it we habitually think so little of the Holy Spirit? Is it that the thought of creation overpowers us, or that the blessing of redemption absorbs every sense and feeling, or that the thought of God's sacramental presence entrances our soul before the altar; that we are enabled entirely to forget that Person who is abroad in our hearts, who comforts our sadness, illumines our darkness, and is the very quickening of our life?

Whence comes it that Catholics for the most part are as cold in this devotion to the Third Person as though He had wrought no wonders in them at all;

as though the Holy Ghost had no office at all, or as though He were a mere accident and circumstance in the vast work of our sanctification? Let me just glance at two reasons; to develop and enter into them there will not be time. And the first applies to those who in *fact*, whatever they may themselves suppose, do not sufficiently realise the infinitely perfect union that exists between Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. They say "Our devotion is to the Incarnate Word, to Him who died and suffered for us and rose again." But, my brethren, they cannot love the Son if they love not the Spirit of the Son, they cannot be like unto Christ unless they be animated by the Spirit of Christ; and what other Spirit was that which descended upon Him, giving Him unction and mission, but the Holy Ghost Himself?

The other explanation of this, our coldness, would be, that few among us aim at perfection at all. What wonder if we have no zeal and fervour for perfection, that we should have no zeal and love for Him whose special office is to *perfect* the redeemed.

When we are created and redeemed, we sit down with folded arms and reflect, "I am created, I am redeemed," and then say, "'Tis well, 'tis well." Oh, would to the Holy Spirit it were otherwise! Would to God that a few more would burn with that fire which consumed the heart of Him who redeemed the world in pain, and who came to enkindle a fire upon the earth—and went away only that the *Spirit* might the more effectually enkindle it! Would to God, dear brethren, they were not so numerous,

those Christians, aye, those clerics and priests, who confine themselves to a pitiably cold and scanty devotion to the Son, while they remain totally forgetful of the burning claims of the Holy Ghost, repeating in their cold and moderate piety, "'Tis well, 'tis well." Ah, brethren, let these be confounded and turned back, blushing for shame, who say unto me, "'Tis well, 'tis well," for almost I could number them amongst the enemies of Christ, for he dishonours both the Father and his Christ, who does not honour from his heart the Holy Ghost.

Two points I will now briefly consider in our relationship to the Holy Ghost, before I finish. The first shall be that the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of sanctity, and the second that he is also the Spirit of light.

And first, he is the Spirit of sanctity. You who have studied theology know that the Holy Ghost is the substantial love of the Father and Son, proceeding from them both through love. But how does He sanctify us? He sanctifies us by completing the work of the Trinity in our souls, by perfecting the seal of the new creation of grace. He is the love of the Father and of the Son breathed forth substantially, and breathed into us as their divinest gift to man. The Holy Spirit is sent into our souls by the Father and the Son. Jesus Christ said that He and His Father were One, and He afterwards promised that "He would send upon us the Paraclete." How then in the new creation are we made to the image and likeness of God? "Send forth Thy Spirit and we shall be created," by receiving the very sanctity of God, the eternal Spirit of sanctity, and

thus becoming according to our measure animated by the self-same spirit of Father and Son, and so like unto God.

And now further, how does He come? The Holy Spirit came down at Pentecost, not as a power, or a principle, not as a quality or accident given to the soul, but as a Divine Person to dwell in us. He dwells in us as none ever dwelt in man before, after a real and personal manner. To which of the Patriarchs or Prophets or men of old was it ever said, "Know you not that you are the temple of the Holy Ghost, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Cor. iii.) This is said to us since the Day of Pentecost; it was never said to any one before the Day of Pentecost. The Apostle tells us now "that we are signed by the Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. i. 13), and that we are "strengthened by the spirit with might unto the inward man"; for the Incarnation raised us to a higher life and laid a holier law upon us, and we need a new strength from above to fulfil it. And finally, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit whereby you are sealed." O my brethren, have you ever thought what a dignity is yours, that the Third Person of the august Trinity should dwell, act, and energise through the members of your human body—that the Holy One, the Sanctifier, the Lifegiver should dwell in your flesh, to quicken into supernatural life and sanctify that which of itself is lifeless, worthless, and corrupt? It is because we do not recognise that our destiny has been in the hands of a Divine Person from our childhood, guiding us and bearing with us, that we

are weak and faint, irritable and peevish, wayward and stubborn, pampered and proud, wrapt up in our own conceits and forgetful of the infinite mercy and sanctity of God.

Much more could be said upon this, indeed, I have but opened the subject; but time presses, I must despatch my second consideration and hasten to a conclusion. The Holy Ghost is our light—*lucerna pedibus meis*—as well as our sanctity. The beloved Apostle St. John is a voucher to this doctrine in his own person and in his epistle. He was the most beloved of the Apostles, the purest, the holiest, and as a consequence, he seems to have been the most illumined, and to have penetrated further than our minds can follow into the mysteries of God. From the sublimity of his teaching he is called the Divine. And what does he write in his Epistle, “You have an unction from the Holy One, and (therefore) know all things. . . . His unction *teacheth* you of all things.” What then, in a word, is this *unction*? It is that which is distilled and spread, like oil poured out, in the soul from the real presence of the Holy One. It is sanctity illumining the soul, elevating it far above sense and matter and human experience.

As fire has the properties of heat and light, so does the presence of the Holy Spirit, who is called *ignis*, a fire, impart light as well as heat. It gives a new eye to the soul, by means of which it can penetrate through darkness, can see truths to others invisible, and can witness to doctrine which those who have not received this unction are unable to

appreciate, aye, and unable even to know. Thus it is that the "unction of the Holy One teacheth all truths." So true is it that sanctity and Divine illumination are to be found together.

But am I not now touching closely on the path that you, my brethren, have to tread? Are not some of you already called, and some being called, and others to be called to know and to teach the truths of God? And how are you to know and to teach all truth if you have not, as St. John says, "An unction from the Holy One"? Your unction cannot be of the hands of man, it must be of the Holy Ghost; He it is who will sanctify and illumine you. Each mind has received its own bent and works according to it; thus one man's character and vocation differs from another, "there are a diversity of gifts, but the same spirit working in all." And so it may have happened that we have not, habitually, with sufficient strength and fulness urged you to the manifest duty of devotion to the Holy Spirit. We have not, however, been silent through any feeling of hesitation or doubt. If, then, hitherto I have not said enough—now at least I will speak out. Then allow me, standing here in the presence of our God, while the Holy Ghost is filling with His presence and expanding with His grace those earthly tabernacles which He has chosen as His dwelling, while with a special grace and presence He descends upon our heads this solemn anniversary day, allow me, for though unworthy, I have received of His grace in Ordination, to call forth from you a special devotion to the Holy Ghost. It is a necessity for you;

if you doubt it, time will tell. Time has told it to others, who in the right time disregarded the warning voice.

You are called to a study of God's truth, and how will you be enlightened unless the Holy Spirit enlighten you? You need not say, We have teachers who themselves are men of God, who themselves study in a spirit of prayer; they make all things clear, they possess the truth, and are enlightened so that of their fulness we may all receive. Oh, my brethren, this is either a delusion or an hypocrisy. Was any man ever so filled with light and sanctity as the Divine Wisdom of the Son Incarnate? Did any man ever unfold truths with His persuasive eloquence and suavity? And yet, my brethren, His disciples were often scandalised in Him, and were hard of understanding. Thomas saying even, after our Lord had told them that they knew whither He was going and the way, "Lord, we *know not* whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way?" And Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us" (St. John xiv. 8). And they all strove amongst themselves who should appear as the greater; and then in spite of all His teaching and warnings they all left Him. And then again, when He was about to ascend to establish a kingdom for them in *heaven*, their hearts were fixed on an *earthly* kingdom, and they asked, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?" Ah, my brethren, the Apostles were ignorant and in the dark, after all our Blessed Lord's pains and teachings; for if the "light shine in *darkness*, the

darkness cannot comprehend it." And surely they were in darkness, not having the light of the Holy Spirit falling inwardly upon their souls. And as it was in the beginning, so it is now : many read and study, and do not *comprehend* because they have not opened out their hearts to the influence and light of the Holy Ghost. God's providence is not altered, and so we cannot expect really to understand, be our own teachers ever so holy, ever so illumined, unless we call down upon our own souls the spirit of light and truth.

Our Blessed Lord told His Apostles, when they were thus earthly minded, that He would depart from them, and that His departure was expedient for them, for they would then give themselves up to prayer and receive plentifully the light of the Holy Ghost. "He, the Spirit of truth, will teach you all things." "*Ille me clarificabit*, He will render when He comes upon you that doctrine which I so long have taught you, glorious and beautiful, that doctrine concerning Myself and My Father, which to the Gentiles indeed is folly and to the Jews a stumbling-block, but which, when known and tasted, is alone able to make you free, and spring up into life everlasting. He will call to your mind all things whatsoever I have taught you." And so, as on a land, dry, hard, and barren, though good seed had been cast into it, did the bright warm sun pour forth its light and heat, drawing up into green leaf and flower the myriads of seeds that had lain hidden in its bosom. *Spiritus Domini replevit orbem terrarum* ; old lessons long forgotten suddenly

revive, truths which before seemed pointless and unmeaning now are pregnant with Divine life and energy, doctrines hitherto unravelled become clear and unmistakable, instincts are given which are above sense. They are told "that no man should teach them"; and even, "if they be delivered up, they shall have no thought how or what to speak, for it shall be given them in that hour what to speak, for it shall not be they that speak, but the Spirit that speaketh in them" (Matt. x. 19, 20).

If there is any meaning, any drift in all that I have said, surely, dear brethren, it is this, that it behoves you all as students to pray to the Spirit of sanctity and light. Without sanctity you cannot obtain light, and without light you will never comprehend as you ought the truths the Apostles taught, and that you will have to teach. Nor does this apply only to those who are actually engaged in the study of theology, it applies to all of you who are preparing for it. Your studies may be different in one respect from the studies of those who are finishing. The tree's growth must be first in its leaves and tender shoots and wood, afterwards in flower and fruit. Does not the same sap give life, strength, and durability to the wood which ultimately congeals and forms into the richest fruits? What is the growth of the hard wood, and then of the delicate flower and sweet fruit, but different stages of the same growth? Then with you, my brethren, no matter what stage of intellectual growth you may be in, no matter how far you may have advanced towards bearing the ripe fruit of doctrine which is to

be the food of souls, you need, all of you, in your different stages of advancement, that grace and light from the Holy One which is the quickening of vigour to your life.

“O Lux beatissima, reple cordis intima tuorum fidelium.
Sine tuo numine nihil est in homine, nihil est innoxium.”

THE DISCIPLES OF THE HOLY GHOST

THE SERMON PREACHED ON ST. EDMUND'S DAY, 1865,
BY THE MOST REV. HENRY EDWARD MANNING,
ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER.*

“You have the unction from the Holy One and know all things.”—1 ST. JOHN ii. 20.

THESE words are like those of St. Paul to the Philip-
pians : “ Omnia possum in eo, qui me confortat.”
—“ I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth
me ” (Phil. iv. 13). That is, Christ is the Fountain of
all light and of all strength. He illuminates the
soul to know all things relating to God and to His
kingdom ; He strengthens the soul to do all things
whatsoever that knowledge demands. Within the
circle of the Divine revelation and of the kingdom
of God, all knowledge and power are bestowed by
our Divine Lord upon His disciples. St. John here
says, you have an unction or anointing from the

* On June 8, 1865, Dr. Manning was consecrated Archbishop
of Westminster, in succession to Cardinal Wiseman. The follow-
ing sermon was preached by him on St. Edmund's Day in the
same year, when for the first time as Archbishop he cele-
brated the patronal feast at the College. Six years later he
again preached on the Feast, choosing as his subject, “ St.
Edmund's Heirloom.” Both sermons were printed in the second
volume of the Archbishop's *Sermons on Ecclesiastical Subjects*.

Holy One ; that is, the Holy Ghost Himself, who dwells in you as your light. St. Paul says, all things are possible through Him who dwells in us as our strength.

This unction, which was first poured upon the Divine Head of the Church, has descended upon the whole mystical Body, and upon every member of the same ; upon each in his own order and measure ; upon the Pontiffs with a perpetual Divine assistance ; upon the Episcopate diffused throughout the world, sustaining it in the light of truth ; upon the Church in its councils, preserving it from all error ; upon the faithful of every tongue, who cannot err in believing because the Church cannot err in teaching. In them the unction of the Spirit of truth becomes the universal illumination, which pervades the whole body with a consciousness of the revelation of God. Therefore St. John here says : “ The unction which you have received from Him, let it abide in you. And you have no need that any one should teach you.” That is to say, you have no need of human teachers, Scribe or Pharisee, disputer or philosopher ; for you have a Teacher who is Divine, and He teaches you of all things, not by fragmentary and partial doctrines, but by the whole revelation of faith. For He “ is truth and is no lie ” ; no intermixture or shade of falsehood can mingle in His illumination or His utterance. The Church, then, is infallible ; and the faithful, so long as they believe its teaching, cannot err. The same Spirit which preserves the Church from error conforms the intelligence and the will of the faithful to its teaching. They know all

things, because they receive the whole revelation by faith. In holy baptism they receive the three graces which unite the soul with God—faith, hope, and charity; and with them sanctifying grace, and the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. Even in the unconscious infant all these are present, just as the power of reason and will are present in the soul. By these they are assimilated and conformed to the mind of the Spirit. So soon as consciousness opens, and the moral and intellectual activity of the soul begins, these graces and gifts begin to conform the soul to the infallible voice of truth. In proportion as we correspond with these lights and motions of grace, we are replenished with a fuller knowledge, and strengthened with a greater power. Even the natural powers of reason and will are elevated and unfolded with greater perfection, in proportion as we correspond with this supernatural grace of our baptism. A faithful use of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost elevates the soul to a double perfection, both in the order of nature and in the order of grace.

Now of this truth we have an evident example in St. Edmund. His intelligence was evidently by nature capacious and penetrating, but much more so by grace. It was to his supernatural illumination that we may trace the subtilty and beauty of his mind, and to the intense spirit of piety which sanctified his will that we may trace his illumination. St. Edmund is an example of the power of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost in elevating and perfecting the intelligence of man. Now it is to this point in his life that I would draw your thoughts. You

already know his history. It is to you a daily meditation—a living, domestic tradition. I need not, therefore, describe his life, nor even enter into the detail of his character. You already know the purity of his youth; his filial love to his mother, from whom he derived his first impressions of God and His kingdom; the piety and sweetness of his character as a pastor; his inflexible fidelity in resisting the usurpations of the royal power upon the liberties of the Church. All these, I say, are as household words to you. St. Edmund is your patron and your father, whose life is your example, and whose prayers are your strength. I will therefore take one only point in the beautiful outline of his life; and that is, the union of piety with his studies. We will contemplate him as the pattern for Catholic students for the service of the altar.

And this I will do for a twofold reason: the one because this topic is most pertinent to the times in which we live; the other, because it has a pointed application to you.

It is most pertinent to this present day, because in St. Edmund we see the union of all science, sacred and secular, as one whole, derived from one fountain, and in perfect harmony and subordination to one supreme truth. This, which is the true basis of Catholic science, and the true method of Catholic study, is especially assailed in this age. All the energy and animosity of men without faith, and sometimes even of men with more faith than perspicacity, is in activity to detach the sciences of the world and of society from the revelation of

God. All the axes and hammers, the levers and wedges are in full play, to rend off the physical and political sciences from God, the Author of society and of all things. And this leads to the separation of the head and the heart, and sets the highest elements of man's nature in schism and apposition against each other, desecrating the intellect, and darkening the affections. Against this, St. Edmund is a direct and luminous witness. What is this disintegration and dissolution of the unity of truth, and this internal confusion of our nature, but the first assault of the enemy of truth? "Omnis spiritus qui solvit Jesum non est ex Deo." "Every spirit that dissolveth Jesus is not of God." And these words are emphatically verified in the spirit of rationalistic criticism, which dissolves the hierarchy of sciences, the unity of the faith, the bonds of the mystical Body, and lastly, the Incarnation of God.

The other reason for speaking of him as a student is its direct application to yourselves, whether you be destined for the world or for the altar. A large part of St. Edmund's life as a student was spent in secular studies, and as a layman. As such, he appeals to one class among you. The later and higher part of his academical career was in sacred study, as an ecclesiastic. As such, he appeals to you who are, or will one day be, priests.

Now, in the whole of his example there is a perfect unity. Even as a layman, his habits of piety were such as would befit a student for the priesthood; and yet they were such as a secular student could habitually practise. I do not, indeed, say that you

can copy him to the letter ; but all may follow the spirit of his example, and, in the main, even the detail.

We read, then, that while he was yet a youth studying at Paris, it was his habit to go for the midnight office to the church of St. Mary ; and when the office was done, to spend the rest of the night before the altar of our Lady ; then to hear Mass at daybreak ; then to go to the schools before he had broken his fast. In the afternoon he returned for Vespers, then went to visit the poor and sick. He ate once a day ; he studied with an image of our Immaculate Mother, surrounded by the mysteries of redemption, before him. Layman as he was, he recited daily the Divine Office, with a salutation of the five sacred wounds, and a meditation on the Passion. All this while he was studying the secular sciences, and chiefly mathematics. Here, then, is a pattern, far off, indeed, in perfection, to you who are destined for the world.

In the midst of this life of piety and study came the event which changed the current of his life. One night, as he was studying mathematics with diagrams before him, he fell into sleep or ecstasy, in which he saw his holy Mother standing over him. She pointed to the figures upon his paper, and said, " My son, what are these ? " She then traced upon the page three circles, in which Edmund recognised the three Divine Persons in the Godhead. From that time he renounced the secular sciences for theology, and with that elevation of aim, he advanced still onward and upward in the practice and spirit of

piety. Such was his private life as a student ; and it was to this converse with God that he owed the spirituality, intensity, and subtilty of intellect which is visible even in the little which remains to us of his writing, and is traditionally recorded in his life.

St. Edmund, then, is a pattern to Catholic students, and a proof of the intellectual development and elevation which is attained by the practice of piety, and by the sanctification of study by union with God.

In his *Speculum Ecclesiæ*, St. Edmund draws out the nature and diversity of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, and their office in the perfection of the soul. What he taught he exemplified, and his life is the illustration of his doctrine. It may be truly said, that it is by the use of these seven gifts that the saints and servants of God differ from other men. The three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, and sanctifying grace, are universal, and essential to all who are justified. But though the just all manifest the presence of these graces, they may show very variously, unequally, and often very little of the operations of these seven gifts. It is especially as they are exercised and unfolded that the soul is elevated to a higher illumination and perfection. Now, these gifts are defined by theologians to be spiritual powers, or faculties, by which the soul corresponds with grace. They enable the soul to put forth its own powers, and to unite itself with the operations of the Holy Spirit. They have therefore been likened to the sails of a ship, which, when spread, catch the wind ; and in

proportion as they are unfolded, the soul is borne onwards, powerfully and speedily, by the Spirit of God. They are distinguished into two kinds—those which perfect the will, and those which perfect the intellect. The gifts which perfect the will are three—holy fear, piety, and fortitude; those that perfect the intellect are four—science and counsel, understanding and wisdom. And these again are distinguished into two kinds—those which perfect the practical intellect, namely, science and counsel; and those which perfect the speculative intellect, or understanding and wisdom.

It would be too long to enter into detail. It will be enough to describe these in outline. The will is perfected first by holy fear. “Initium sapientiæ timor Domini.” “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” The fear of the Lord is the first; wisdom is the last of the seven gifts. Holy fear casts out sin and leads on to piety; that is, the filial fear, the love of sons to a father, which is even in the blessed. It is piety which corresponds with “the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” And to this are united fortitude, courage, endurance of penances, of the cross, of shame, suffering, and, if need be, even unto blood striving against sin. These three, then, perfect the will.

The two which perfect the practical intellect are science, or the light by which the reason sees God in all things, and all things in God. St. Edmund in his *Mirror of the Church*, says that there are four planes or fields in which God is reflected. Two within, reason and revelation, or the light of nature

in the intelligence, and the illumination of the Holy Ghost elevating the intelligence by a supernatural light. Two also without, the creation and the Church, or in other words, the world of nature, which is the first creation whereon the traces and outlines of God's being, presence, and image are inscribed in characters of goodness, wisdom, and power; and the second creation, or the mystical Body of the Incarnate Word, in which the image of the invisible God is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ. It was this gift of science which enlightened St. Edmund to see God in all these four reflections of His Presence, and to behold all these lights.

The gift of counsel is the spirit of equity, discernment, moral intuition of the higher and more perfect laws of obligation, generosity, sanctity, and conformity to the mind of the Spirit.

The gift of understanding is that whereby the truths of the natural and of the supernatural order are rightly apprehended, both in their definition and in their principles. Intelligence is described as the power, *intus legendi*, of reading the inner sense and reason of things, not the face of the world only, but its laws; not the letter of Scriptures only, but its sense; not the verbal traditions of theology only, but its unity and harmony, the relation of truth with truth, and the procession of one truth from another.

Lastly, the gift of wisdom elevates the light of understanding by a supernatural perception of the sweetness of truth. *Sapientia* is *sapere*, to taste and to know by another sense. The Psalmist says,

“Taste and see that the Lord is sweet.” This is wisdom, or a light of the Holy Spirit, whereby Divine things are at the same time seen and tasted. Such is the highest state of the soul on earth, the foretaste of the beatific vision.

Now of the first three gifts, all the martyrs, confessors, saints, penitents, and servants of God in any kind and degree, are examples. Fear, piety, and fortitude are the beginning, the middle, and end of their perfection and perseverance.

Of the last four we may take special examples from the saints and doctors of the Church.

Of the gift of science, St. Gregory the Great and St. Ambrose may be taken as examples. The moral beauty of the first creation, or of the new, of the world, and of the Church, shines through all their pages.

Of the gift of counsel, St. Antoninus, the *pater consiliorum*, and St. Alphonsus, are illustrations. In them the moral theology of the Church rises from commandments to precepts, and from precepts to the counsels and science of perfection.

Of the gift of understanding, St. Anselm and St. Thomas are witnesses. In them the intellectual science of faith and the dogmatic theology of the Church resides with surpassing and singular order, clearness, fulness, and harmony.

Of the gift of wisdom, or the union of truth and sweetness, of light and love, St. Bonaventura and St. Edmund are luminous examples.

It is certain that all these exercised all the seven gifts in some measure, but not all equally; and it

was this pre-eminent exercise of one over the others which gave a special and characteristic perfection.

So is it in the life of every true Catholic student. From whatsoever cause in nature or in grace, in the constitution of his mind, or by the special inspiration of God, some will correspond more fully and adequately with one rather than with another of these seven gifts; and from this arises the diversity of theologians and doctors in the Church, dogmatic, moral, mystical, and ascetic, evangelists, teachers, and guides in the way of perfection.

If, then, the use of these seven gifts be the source of light and wisdom to the soul, the loss of them is cause of folly and of intellectual darkness. St. Paul says of the heathens, who, "when they knew God, did not glorify Him" as God, "or give thanks," that "they became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened." An intellectual emptiness and darkness fell judicially upon them. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Rom. i. 21, 22). Intellectual pride was punished by intellectual degradation. "They liked not to retain God in their knowledge." Their hearts were at enmity with Him, and their intellect turned away from the light, because there was neither piety nor holy fear in them, therefore science and counsel, understanding and wisdom, departed from them. What was true then, is true always. It was true in the times of twilight, it is true in the noontide of revelation. How can we otherwise account for the atrocities of the French philosophers in the last century, but by the sensuality which quenched the

light of the Spirit of God? The perception of God in His creatures was extinguished by the Spirit of impiety and of mockery. Rousseau and Voltaire are normal examples of the darkness which falls upon intellect, howsoever subtle and cultivated, when it is sensual. The same, too, is to be seen at this day in the anti-Catholic philosophy and anti-Catholic politics of our time. They are anti-Catholic because they are anti-Christian. The revolution which is undermining the Continent is essentially infidel, if not atheistic; and it has penetrated widely into our literature, especially into public opinion. The enmity of the will against the Church and truth of God has generated the most extravagant illusions and falsehoods in minds which are both clear and capable in the things of this world.

Another example of this may be taken in two writers of our own times. One is the author of the "Positive Philosophy," in which not only God and His operations find no place, but law, cause, effect, and the like are rejected as figments of the brain, or metaphysical superstitions. The sum of philosophy is to note facts and phenomena, without any interpretation of the reason; that is, sense is supreme and sole. Whatsoever we can see, taste, weigh, touch, and test by chemistry—that is the matter of philosophy; but the reason may not predicate anything as to the relations in which facts and phenomena stand to each other. Of all causes which are to be eliminated as superstitions, the first cause is the worst of all. Atheism is the normal state of man, and the perfection of science. This may be philosophy in

the eyes of its disciples. To us it is reason stunted, human nature cut down to a pollard, sense without intelligence, and therefore irrational.

Another form of this is in a well-known book on modern civilisation, in which society is described as the necessary sum of necessary agents, without either the free-will of man or the moral government of God. Such is the world of the old creation, and the new, in the eyes of those who proceed by their own lights, in opposition to the gifts of the Holy Ghost. To them the Church has no light, no revelation, no Divine image, the world no reflection of its Maker, the reason no radiance of God; the world, with all its glory and beauty, has no Divine intelligence shining through it, no tracings of the Divine hand, no agencies of the Divine will. It is beautiful but vacant, like the fair countenance of an idiot—the most mournful and unintelligent of all the works of God, or, rather, the most humbling and melancholy obscuration of the perfections of our nature, and of the reflections of the Divine. Such is the world, with all its aspects of wisdom, goodness, and power, to eyes and intelligences which have forfeited the gifts of science and of wisdom.

And further, as the loss of these seven gifts leads to intellectual darkness, so the obstructing of their activity leads to a proportionate loss of light.

To those who are within the full light of faith, it seems inexplicable how men of capable and cultivated minds should fail to perceive its Divine certainty. The condition of England at this moment

is an example. The so-called Reformation has so obscured and deadened the consciousness of the presence and operations of the Holy Spirit in the Church and in the soul, and has so extinguished the sense of the supernatural order, that the majority of baptized persons seem to be unconscious of their baptismal grace. They have hardly so much as heard of the seven gifts, except in the Catholic Catechism, and books of devotion, the enumeration and the names of them are hardly to be found. It is not wonderful, therefore, that few pray for them or correspond with them. Nay, more than this: the nature of regeneration, of the three theological virtues, even of grace itself, is little realised and hardly understood. A universal unconsciousness of anything but the powers of nature has spread over England, and a great obscurity has risen between it and the unseen world. The objects of faith are dim, and therefore the definition of them, that is, the doctrines or dogmas which express them, are proportionately inexact and confused. Compare with the intellectual haze and mistiness of even learned Anglican writers, the intensity and reality of St. Edmund's meditations on God and the creation of man; or the elaborate writings of the highest and best authors of the last three hundred years, such as Hooker or Jeremy Taylor, with the luminous precision of St. Thomas or of Suarez. I know of no other way accounting for the possibility of Protestantism, but by supposing that the office of the Holy Ghost had been obscured. The theory which supposes His infallible voice to be suspended, is so

far rendered imaginable by obscurities and contradictions of those who teach it.

To many it seems impossible to extend the plea of invincible ignorance to men who, with full cultivation, abundant leisure, possession of all kinds of opportunities, contact with Catholics, Catholic books of every period, fathers, schoolmen, theologians, yet remain in the fragmentary belief of Anglicanism. It seems impossible that they should read antiquity and councils, especially the Council of Trent, and that they should continue to deny the authority of the Catholic Church, and claim to interpret its doctrines in opposition to its world-wide voice. And yet it is easy to see, that if the gifts of the Holy Ghost be obstructed, the light of the soul is clouded, and men may see grotesque and unreal forms in everything around them; as travellers, when the sun is down, see all things in distortion, without distance and without truth. From this comes all manner of material heresy—not formal indeed, we may trust—in a great multitude, who are led like sheep, but nevertheless the matter is heretical. This is true not of the unlearned only, but of the most cultivated. Indeed, in them it seems as if the more they study, the farther they become involved in the processes of their own private judgment. Every approximation even to the doctrines of the Catholic Church strengthens, because it depends upon the exercises of private judgment; so that none are so far off as many that seem to be near. They are near only in accident of particular opinions; but afar off by the whole principle, procedure, and spirit of their

minds. The gifts of holy fear and of piety would make them docile, and afraid to go alone; the gifts of science and of intellect would have shown them the unity, harmony, and coherence of truth. It would become its own evidence; for clearness and precision are qualities of truth, and proofs of its Divine certainty.

God has made submission to His church a condition of knowing His truth; and without correspondence with the gifts of the Holy Ghost there will be no submission. The most extensive and multifarious study of Scripture, Fathers, Councils, theologians, without the living guidance of the Church and the oral traditions of its theology, will not make a disciple of Jesus Christ. We must be critics or disciples, both we cannot be; and before we can be disciples, we must cease to play the critic. The critical spirit is the antagonist of the seven gifts in all their array, from holy fear to wisdom.

And this leads me back to the truth with which I began. It is the faithful use of these gifts of the Holy Spirit which makes men to be the true disciples of Jesus. By disciple is to be understood not a learner only, but a learner who is subject to discipline. Jesus made His Apostles to be disciples before He sent them forth as doctors. They surrendered their whole will and their whole intelligence to Him, to be trained and illuminated by His teaching and His grace. What He did for them, the Church does for us. *Doctores fidelium Ecclesiae discipuli*. The doctors of the faithful are the disciples of the Church, because the unction which is upon

it teaches them of all things. They first learn to correspond with its Divine voice ; and by the seven gifts of the Spirit they are inwardly conformed, both in will and in intelligence, to “ the mind which was in Christ Jesus.” They learn to believe as the Church believes, and to teach as the Church teaches. They are in perfect harmony with the living instincts of the Church, with the mind of its Councils, and voice of its Pontiffs.

Now this habit of mind, which I will call the Catholic spirit, has five signs or rules, which will be found in a true Catholic student.

1. The first sign is a loving submission to the Church, not a bare submission, which may be exacted of a cold intellectual necessity, or by a servile fear by judgment, but a loving submission, a joyful and thankful obedience to the Church as a Divine guide ; and generous and unreserved conformity of our whole nature and mind, intellectual and spiritual, to its guidance and direction. This is impossible to those who look upon the Church as a human society, the creation of legislatures, the ward of royal supremacies. But to all who know it to be the Body of Christ, inhabited by the Holy Ghost, illuminated and guided by His light and voice, the Church is an object of faith and love, the tabernacle of God among men the nearest approach to the beatific vision and union of the soul with God. Such minds will not be content with a bare submission of outward obedience, or of silence, but will render an inward assent and affiance of the heart. They will obey not only the dogma of faith delivered by Councils, but the whole spirit

and mind which pervades the discipline, worship, and devotions of the Church. They will feel that to submit by constraint is no submission of the will; to submit coldly is not the submission of disciples or of sons. It would be the submission of fear or of reason—not of love; but the submission of love includes both, and spring from the gift of wisdom, which not only sees but tastes the truth.

2. A second sign is devotion to the Saints. Next to the infallible voice of the Church, there is no guidance so certain as the doctrine of the Saints. Theologians boldly say, that what the Saints unite in teaching is undoubtedly true. "The consent of the Saints is the sense of the Holy Spirit." Whatsoever they unanimously teach must be either from the infallible guidance of the Church, or from the illumination of the Holy Ghost, or from the operation of His seven gifts, which in perfecting their reason and their will upon the same forms and laws of truth conform them to each other. There are about holy minds lights and instinct which transcend our ordinary level. They see, even in this world, truths which are beyond our reach. How much more the Saints, in whom the spirit of sanctity abides in the largest measure. St. Philip used to counsel his penitents, in choosing books, to take those whose authors have S. before their names. In them we may find not only the dogma of faith, but instincts, discernments, intuitions in matters both near to the faith and remote from it, which are most salutary for our guidance. The gift of piety will conform

us to the mind of the Saints, because it is the mind of the Spirit.

3. A third sign is deference to theologians. Upon the lowest ground it may be affirmed, that when the theologians of the Church agree, no individual without temerity can oppose them. As a mere intellectual tradition, the consentient judgment of the learned must prevail over the opinion of any individual. There must be a strange self-sufficiency and vain-glory in any one who revises and corrects their discernment. And this upon the mere basis of intellectual culture and acuteness.

But there is a further reason still. The theologians of the Church, if not all canonised Saints, though many are this also, at least have used their natural gifts and powers with great diligence and fidelity, and with a more than ordinary correspondence with the Holy Spirit. They are, as a body, an eminent example of the gifts of knowledge and counsel, wisdom and understanding; and their works of speculative and practical theology, of dogmatic, moral, and mystical science, are the direct fruit of those four gifts. They have a claim, then, to our deference, not only on the ground of intellectual superiority confirmed by an unanimity in some things, and a wide consent in others, but also as doctors of the faithful, in whom a higher intellectual cultivation was elevated by a large illumination. Their judgments and decisions cannot indeed make matter of faith, but they certainly make matter of moral certainty. No one who sets himself against their united voice can be cleared of self-sufficiency and of rashness.

The gifts of counsel would restrain a Catholic student from contradicting the theologians of the Church.

4. A fourth sign of docility is a fear and suspicion of novelty. Tertullian says, "From the order itself it is manifest that what is first in tradition is from the Lord and true; what is afterwards brought in is foreign and false."¹ The identity and immutability of truth is the basis of the advancing maturity of conception and of expression which pervades the doctrines of faith and the science of theology. But in all this there is nothing new. The same old truths are defined with new precision. The terminology may be new, the truth is as old as the revelation of faith. The Church presents to the faithful *non nova sed nove*—not new doctrines but new exactness of definition. Wheresoever, then, new doctrines are introduced, as by Luther and Jansenius; or new interpretations of Scripture, as by Calvin or Erasmus; or new principles in philosophy, as by Descartes and many moderns, a Catholic student will beware. He will know that the smallest curve may, if produced, lead to a wide deflection; that a single philosophical error will import a series of errors into the doctrine of faith; that one false premiss in the science of God is like one erroneous figure in a long calculation; and that new propositions, though they be attractive by their completeness or plausibility, may carry disorder through whole treatises of theology. He will take his stand upon the sacred terminology and scientific tradition of the Church in its schools; and will not be tempted to depart from them for any

¹ *De Præscript, contra Hæret.*, c. xxxi.

novelties, howsoever alluring. This caution is all the more needful for days in which we hear, not from Protestants only, but even from some Catholics, that the scholastic philosophy and theology are antiquated, unfit for modern thought, and must be replaced by new methods and a new criticism of history and of antiquity, in order to lay the basis of science and to generate faith.

5. The fifth and last sign I will mention is mistrust of self. A Catholic student will be confident wheresoever the Church has spoken, or the consent of Saints or of theologians goes before him ; but when he is left to himself he will have a wholesome mistrust of his own opinions. *Aliqua scire, et de aliis prudenter dubitare*—to know some things, and to doubt prudently about the rest, is the spirit of docility. And assuredly no man who knows himself will confide in his own light. We have only to remember how often we have been wrong ; how often, with all the means of knowledge about us, we have been ignorant or unable to see the truth ; how our most confident opinions at one time have turned out to be visibly untrue at another ; how little we have ever read, how much less we have studied, how much less again we have mastered ; how fragmentary and incoherent is our best knowledge of many things ; how vast and complex is truth, both in the natural and supernatural order ; how unilluminated we are, compared with the Saints ; how ignorant, compared with the doctors of the Church ; how narrow and darkened our individual mind is, compared with the mind of the Spirit, that is, of the Church, which for

these eighteen hundred years has "reached mightily from end to end, sweetly disposing all things." It is impossible for any man to realise these things without becoming less and less in his own eyes, and learning a thorough mistrust of his own powers and knowledge. Strange inversion of truth and of the moral instincts! Confidence in our own light is a virtue out of the Catholic unity, but a vice within it. It is the maximum of certainty to those who have no Divine and infallible teacher; it is the minimum to those who are guided by the Church of God. As the Greeks said: "If we cannot sail, we must row;" if we have no Divine guidance by the Spirit which breathes through the Church, we must painfully toil onward by the stretch and reliance of our own strength.

These, then, are the signs of the true disciples of the Holy Spirit: loving submission to the Church; devotion to the Saints; deference to theologians; fear and suspicion of novelty; mistrust of self. Such men are led by the Spirit of God, and are His sons indeed. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," and it is by His seven gifts that He leads those who correspond with His operations onwards and upwards to perfection.

This, then, is the operation of the gifts of the Holy Ghost upon the intellect and the will. But that this operation be effectual, it is necessary that both the intellect and the will correspond to it. And for this, certain acts and habits of the soul are required. The first of them is a humble and sincere cleansing of the conscience by good confession. "The

light of the body is the eye ; if thine eye be single, the whole body shall be lightsome." That is, the light of the soul is the conscience. If the conscience be pure, the whole soul shall be full of light. "The clean in heart shall see God." A heart darkened by any impurity hides the vision of God from itself.

Next is mental prayer, or the realisation of the objects of faith by the intellectual vision. This visible world is so loud and intrusive, that the world unseen is visionary and powerless over men. The objects of faith need to be realised before they can be appreciated, and appreciated before their active influence upon us can have a constraining power. The world unseen, by habitual meditation passes into our consciousness. We live and act upon the motives of the invisible world, as the men of this world live and act upon its earthly maxims. God and His heavenly court, the communion of Saints, the state of the departed, become certain, and if I may use the word, become sensible to faith.

A third means whereby the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the heart are unfolded into activity is the study of Holy Scripture. Forasmuch as the books of Holy Writ have God for their Author, there is an affinity between His gifts in the soul and His inspirations in the written Word. The Scripture is the fruit and the record of those seven gifts, in their amplest and profoundest manifestation. The Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, and Saints of the Old and New Laws afford luminous examples of every one of these endowments of the Spirits of

God, both in the intellect and the will, and that in the most perfect degree and maturity. The holy Scripture, therefore, speaks with a Divine voice to the soul. Every part of it is the Word of God ; and every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God elicits a response from a soul in which the same Spirit dwells. The living oracle of the Church and the silent utterances of Scripture are alike the voice of God ; all else is subordinate.

Therefore it is that the Saints have exhibited such a profound love and veneration of the written Word. St. Edmund was wont to kiss the pages of the Book when he opened it and when he closed it. St. Charles used to read Holy Scripture with bare head and on his knees. They recognised in it the presence and the voice of the Spirit of God ; by it they conversed with Him, and by converse with Him they were elevated to a singular degree of interior conformity to the mind of the Spirit. To you all, as Christians and as Catholics, especially in this land and in these days, a true and exact knowledge of Scripture is of great moment ; and if to all, how much more to those of you who are to be the teachers of others, the preachers of salvation, the interpreters of the faith, the witnesses of the revelation of God. To you, who first receive the full illumination of the Catholic Church, and grow up in the faith as the root of your spiritual consciousness, the page of Scripture is open and full of light. You read it, not by the broken lights of private judgment, or the wavering lights of the private spirit, but in full and steadfast illumination of the day of Pentecost,

in the midst of which it was written. Study, therefore, the text of the sacred books with the closest application of all your natural intelligence, and a faithful correspondence with the supernatural gifts of the Spirit of Truth, whose disciples you are. He is your theologian and your guide in the science of God. Read the sacred text as the records of His teaching, the brief but harmonious outlines of the world-wide enunciation of the faith. To you, all is unity, symmetry, and order; as light which, streaming from a single point, diffuses itself in an equable and perfect radiance.

The fourth and last means of which I will speak is habitual prayer for light, to the Holy Spirit of truth. Be devout to the third Person of the Holy Trinity. To know Him, His presence, personality, and power, His twofold office, in the Church, and in our own soul, is the condition of the perfect illumination of the intellect. Without this, the intellect may be cultivated, but it will be cold and dim. The errors, low views, fragmentary opinions, distorted judgment, partial statements, ill-sounding propositions, shallow appreciations, of men endowed with great natural gifts, are to be traced to an inadequate realisation of the office of the Holy Spirit, and of His relation to their intellect and their will. Their theology is like themselves. A student who is united by the gift of piety to the light of the Holy Spirit will be implicitly a theologian. The degree of his explicit knowledge will still depend on natural gifts, and their due cultivation; and yet there is an infused theology in docile hearts which is seldom

at fault, and often transcends the cultivation of the intellectual. Before and after your studies, ask light from your Divine Teacher. Then, with the page before you, preserve a consciousness of your dependence upon Him.

St. Edmund was one day waiting in the schools at Paris for the coming of his scholars. He was about to expound to them the mystery of the Holy Trinity. While they tarried, he fell into a slumber or a rapture ; and he saw a dove descending towards him. It bore in its beak the sacred Host, and laid it on his lips. When he returned to himself, he began his lecture, and all who heard him wondered at the words of sweetness and light which proceeded out of his mouth. It was this which gave to all he spoke its energy and power. The few brief writings which remain to us are full of unction and the fire of the Spirit of God. We can understand, from the few words which remain to us, how the hearts of men thrilled as they heard him. What more simple, yet what more intense, than such words as these : " If you are saved, every hair of your head shall be glorified," or again, " If the whole world were full of fine dust, the atoms would be beyond number ; and yet your soul is a thousand times more capacious than the world, and is filled with the mercies of God beyond the number of all created things " ? He spoke out of the consciousness of his own soul, which had lived from childhood in intimate communion with God. It was the reality of this spiritual experience which gave him power over the hearts of men. He spoke what he knew

by an interior sense deeper than intellect, more refined than all learned cultivation.

Such must be your preparation for the work of your life. You are called to be pastors of the flock, and you must go before the sheep committed to you, in all things ; in the science of God and of the Saints, in the unction of grace and truth, in sanctity of life, in wisdom and the power of the Spirit. You are set to be fishers of men, and you must take them by the net in the sea, and by the hook let down in silence, in patient toil, and the science of charity. You are sent forth as reapers into the harvest-field, to bear the burden of the day and the heat, and to gather maniples of souls with joy for the eternal garner. To you is made the promise of the prophet : " They that are learned "—not in the learning of this world, but in the science of God—" shall shine as the brightness of the firmament ; and they that instruct many to justice, as stars for all eternity."

THE DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE FOURTH
PROVINCIAL SYNOD OF WESTMINSTER,
BY BISHOP ULLATHORNE.

NOTE.—The Fourth Provincial Synod of Westminster was held at St. Edmund's in the months of July and August 1873. The following is the list of bishops and provincials who attended the Synod :—

HENRY EDWARD MANNING, Archbishop of Westminster.
THOMAS JOSEPH BROWN, O.S.B., Bishop of Newport and Menevia.
WILLIAM BERNARD ULLATHORNE, O.S.B., Bishop of Birmingham.
JAMES BROWN, Bishop of Shrewsbury.
RICHARD ROSKELL, Bishop of Nottingham.
WILLIAM VAUGHAN, Bishop of Plymouth.
WILLIAM CLIFFORD, Bishop of Clifton.
FRANCIS AMHERST, Bishop of Northampton.
ROBERT CORNTHWAITE, Bishop of Beverley.
JAMES CHADWICK, Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle.
JAMES DANELL, Bishop of Southwark.
HERBERT VAUGHAN, Bishop of Salford.
BERNARD O'REILLY, Bishop of Liverpool.
ROGER BEDE VAUGHAN, O.S.B., Coadjutor Archbishop of Sydney.
EDWARD HOWARD, Archbishop, Vicar-Capitular of St. Peter's, Rome.
ABBOT BURCHALL, O.S.B., President of the Anglo-Benedictines.
Rev. G. V. KING, O.P., Provincial of the Dominicans.
Rev. PETER GALLWEY, S.J., Provincial of the Jesuits.
Rev. BERNARD O'LOUGHLIN, Cong. Pass., Provincial of the Passionists.
Rev. ANGELO RINOLFI, Provincial of the Institute of Charity.
Rev. ROBERT A. COFFIN, C.SS.R., Provincial of the Redemptorists.

*The following Dedication was prefixed to the
Discourse as first published:—*

TO

THE VERY REVEREND AND REVEREND THE
Diocesan Clergy of the Province of Westminster

WITH WHOM I HAVE LABOURED SO LONG,
WHOM I HAVE LOVED MORE THAN THEY HAVE KNOWN,
LOVED WITH ALL A BISHOP'S LOVE, AND
WITH ALL A BISHOP'S THIRST FOR THE PERFECTION
OF THEIR LIFE AND LABOURS,

THIS DISCOURSE

IS RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
BY THEIR DEVOTED SERVANT

THE AUTHOR

DISCOURSE
AT THE FOURTH PROVINCIAL SYNOD
OF WESTMINSTER

“Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them, They shall be holy to their God, and they shall not profane His name: for they offer the fire-offering of the Lord, and the bread of their God, and therefore they shall be holy. . . . Because they are consecrated to their God, and eat the bread of their God. Let them therefore be holy, because I also am holy, the Lord, who sanctify them.”—LEVITICUS xxi.

MOST Rev., very Rev., and Rev. Brethren,—In our First Provincial Synod we gave our local church its canonical organisation and the outlines of its discipline. In our second, we provided the rules for the administration of its temporalities, and planted a guard against their alienation. In our third and last Synod, our deliberations were chiefly occupied with our mixed Colleges, with the spirit and scope of our higher education, and with that question, more than once urged upon us by the Holy See, of establishing Diocesan Seminaries according to the provisions of the Council of Trent. And judging from the draft of subjects that await our consideration, the work of this Fourth Synod will be of not less vital importance than that of the three whose decrees are already in operation; for in so far as external legislation can accomplish a thing so great, nothing less is contemplated than to place the crown-

ing virtue of sanctity upon the ecclesiastical edifice already constructed. In other words, it is proposed, that from the Church's traditional doctrine and law, we should draw up and give synodical force to those precepts of sanctity, whereby both bishops and priests advance in holiness, and augment the sacred energy of their pastoral labours.

What makes a small army to prevail against great numbers? Is it not its high spirit, its vigorous discipline, its keener weapons, and its more skilful direction? And what gives the victory to God's servants over the hosts of error and sin? Is it not the force and elevation of their inward spirit? Is it not that strong discipline of the saints that gives steadfastness to wear, and power to wield, the armour of God? The calendar of the Church and her whole history bear witness that God's ministry is fruitful in proportion to the sanctity of His ministers.

If I concentrate your attention upon the diocesan as opposed to the regular clergy, it is because the regular clergy have their own rules of sanctity provided by their founders and enforced by their own superiors; and that being exempt in their internal affairs from our synodal action, they look to their own chapters for their spiritual government. Yet for the very reason that they are so happily provided, ought we to take care that the diocesan clergy be not left without precise definitions of that rule of sanctity, which their Divine Founder, our Blessed Lord Himself, has attached to their order and profession. Nor, in treating of the sanctification of the clergy, is it possible to overlook those youthful

aspirants to the priestly office, upon whose holy training the future of the Church depends. From the holy seminarist comes the holy priest.

Having glanced at the chief subjects that await our deliberations, I come, my brethren, to the text of my discourse. The Sacred Scripture tells us that what God demands before all things of His priests is holiness. He requires science, or He will reject them ; zeal to do their office, or they will be a useless encumbrance. But the highest and most indispensable attribute of God's priest is sanctity. What then is sanctity ? It must be considered in its two aspects, as it looks to man and as it looks to God. As it looks to man, sanctity consists in freedom from whatever is unclean or spiritually impure, be it in mind, in heart, or in body. As it looks towards God, sanctity consists in devotion to His love and service, and in the oblation of ourselves through His gifts to Him. It is this union of purity with devotion which generates that odour of sanctity of which the Holy Spirit is the inspiring principle. But the perfection of sanctity is measured by the degree of charity of which the humble soul receives the vital flame. For "never," says St. Thomas, "can human nature be perfected unless it be united with God."¹ And as the holy things are for the holy, and the holiest mysteries of grace demand the holiest ministration, so the higher the order of sacred ministration given to man, the greater is the degree of sanctity demanded of him. Even to the Levites, who served the sons of Aaron in the sacrifice, it was

¹ S. Thom. in 5 cap. ad. Ephes.

said: "Be ye clean, ye who carry the vessels of the Lord."

Of the priests God demanded a threefold sanctity. The first was detachment from the common life and pursuits of men and dependence on God. God was their inheritance and their lot, and they lived upon what was offered to God. They were to touch no unclean thing of all that the Lord had declared to be unclean, nothing that bore the shadow or resemblance of offence. They were not even to come near the dead bodies of their dearest relatives, because death is the likeness and the fruit of sin, and the death of Christ had not yet made it holy. Their first degree of holiness, then, was abstention from things unholy and profane; lest, ministering in the holy place, and nigh unto God's communicated presence, they should bring spiritual uncleanness into proximity with God. "They shall be holy unto their God, and they shall not defile His name."

The fire-offering was the burning incense, the symbol of prayer, and the image of a soul that in the fire of charity exhales herself unto God. The bread-offering of their God was daily placed on the golden table that stood before the Mercy-Seat. It was the prophetic figure of the Eucharistic sacrifice and communion. And of the priests who made this offering and divided this bread, a second and a higher degree of holiness was demanded. They were not only to be clean and continent in person, but devout in their oblation. "They offer the fire-offering of the Lord, and the bread of their God, and therefore

shall they be holy." "*Holy to the Lord.*" This was the inscription borne on the brow of the high-priest, a sign to all the priests, of whom he was the summit, of their consecration to God. "*Doctrine and Truth.*" These words he carried engraven upon his breast, an admonition to them all that God's priests shall be taught of truth, and shall walk in its light. "Because they are consecrated to their God, and eat the bread of their God. Therefore they shall be holy." God would have no one to receive His unction, to stand at His altar, to touch His sacrifice, to be so close to His communicated presence, to shadow forth the Divine Priesthood of the Son of God, who is not both pure, and devout, and holy with communicated sanctity. Wherefore God commanded that His priests should have that third, that imitative, that unitive degree of sanctity. "Let them therefore be holy, because I am holy, the Lord, who sanctify them."

But if the thrice holy God demanded a thrice holy priesthood in the sons of Aaron, what purity, what devotion, what sanctity does the same God ask of the Christian priests who continue the sacrifice of the God Incarnate? They bore the image of Christ in outward shadow, and we His character engraven in our soul. They offered earthly things, and we the heavenly mysteries. They could accomplish nothing for the souls of men, and we have received Christ's power both to cleanse and to sanctify them. "Behold," says our Lord, "I make all things new." But amongst those new things never did He contemplate His priests without His

humility, or their handling the fruit of His sufferings without His patience, or their exercising His power without the sanctity that is the secret of that power. Let us, then, make all things new, my brethren, heart, voice, and work. And may His Holy Spirit clothe our minds with light to see, and our wills with strength to work out the law of sacerdotal holiness, to the glory of His name.

I dwell upon this argument the more readily, my brethren, and you will listen to it the more devoutly, because there never was a time when the sacred prerogatives of the Catholic priesthood more required to be exalted; for, on the one hand, we have the miscellaneous hosts of daring unbelievers who scoff at all priesthood as a worn-out fable and a human imposition; whilst, on the other hand, we have increasing numbers of men who daringly lay claim to the sacerdotal office that their fathers rejected, and that without title of descent, or colour of tradition, or power over the sacrifice, or that law of sacerdotal purity that devotes the priest to the virginal victim. And even within the sanctuary of the Church there are some to be found who measure the standard of sacerdotal sanctity with eyes that have but too sæcular a colour in them.

Very near should we be to the Holy Sacrifice, my brethren, and very keenly should we feel what the souls of men have cost, and what a thing it is to offer and dispense the life-giving blood of Christ before we can realise the holiness demanded of the priest.

The Priesthood and the Incarnation of Christ

form one sole and indivisible mystery. To divide them is to separate Christ from Himself. The stupendous union of God and man in one person is the preparation of the Priest and the Victim in one person. Conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, in her, as in His temple, was Christ clothed with a body, anointed as a priest, and consecrated a sacrifice for the sins of the world. "Wherefore, when He cometh into the world, He saith: Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldest not: but a body Thou hast fitted to me. Holocausts for sin did not please Thee. Then said I: Behold I come: in the head of the book it is written of Me: that I should do Thy will, O God." And as St. Paul again says: "Christ did not glorify Himself that He should be a High-Priest, but He who said to Him: Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. As in another place He saith: Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedec." Not by His eternal generation from the Father is Christ a High-Priest, but by His temporal generation in Mary of the Holy Ghost; for His priesthood is in His human nature, even although united with the Divine personality. And yet, again, He is a priest for ever, because through the eternal predestination and the prophetic declarations and sacrifices He is in very truth, "the Lamb that was slain from the beginning of the world." He took our nature in its mortal condition, that, except our sin, He might in all things suffer like unto us. He took it from a pure source, most pure, that, united to the Godhead in His sufferings,

He might purify the world. "Whom God the Father hath anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power." For which reason He was both Jesus and Christ. Jesus for our salvation, Christ for the unction of His priesthood. "For in Him dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead corporally."

That Godhead, which in that human nature dwells, is the Word of the Father and the very God, through whom all intelligent creatures were made, and by whom, as from the uncreated light, their reason is illuminated.

Reflect on the wonderful mysteries that come together in the sacrifice.

The first, most high and unsearchable, is the hypostatic union of the Priest with the eternal Word.

The second, most awful and profound, is the identity of the Priest with the Victim.

The third, most dreadful and significant, is the choice of the cruel and ignominious cross for the altar of sacrifice. Why was the cross chosen for the altar of sacrifice? The cross was chosen that the malice of sin might be revealed to its utmost depth. The cross was chosen that pride might be searched through by humility, and sensuality by suffering. The cross was chosen on which to offer the most consummate expiation, and to show how exceeding was the charity with which God has loved us. The cross was chosen, with all its load of shame and suffering, as the counterpart to the tree of Paradise, and that with the Lord of life suspended on it, the cross might be the example, strength,

and grace of all suffering souls, guilty or innocent, who, in the times to come, should cling to it for light and comfort.

The fourth great mystery in the sacrifice, most generous and consoling, is the oblation, through the Divine High-Priest and Victim, of all humanity, upon the cross. The body was offered with the head, the Church with her suffering Pontiff. All whomsoever His blood shall ever touch were nailed with Him on the cross, and St. Paul, who knew this secret well, has said: "If one died, then all have died." And again, "For ye are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God." And once more, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified together with Him, that the body of sin may be destroyed." And summing up the truth in himself, the Apostle says, "With Christ I am nailed to the cross." For the cross is the altar of the whole world, and its virtue passes unto all who embrace it with belief, and who suffer in its spirit. Even the innocent and the humble are immolated upon its branches, and are perfected by the immolation. Wherefore St. Leo says: "Our Lord Jesus Christ stood forth one and alone, in whom all die, all are buried, all rise again." And again: "The cross of Christ is the mystery of the true altar that was foretold, where through the saving Victim, the offering of human nature should be celebrated." Wherefore as "all those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its vices and concupiscences," they can say with the Apostle: "I fill up the sufferings of Christ that are wanting

in my flesh for His body, which is the Church." The fourth mystery, then, is the oblation of the body of humanity together with the Head.

The fifth, of unspeakable condescension, is the creation of a human priesthood by the word of the Divine High-Priest, to prolong the Sacrifice over earth and time, and to bring its fruits to all the children of men.

The sixth, most diffusive of life and charity, is the communion of Christ, through the action of that priesthood, with all souls that are drawn to Him in faith and love.

The seventh, embracing all these mysteries in one, is the unity and identity of the sacrifice offered by men on earth with the sacrifice that is offered by Christ in heaven. So that, as St. Chrysostom says, the arm of Christ is extended into the oblation of the priest. This unity is expressed in that solemn prayer to which tradition attaches so profound a significance, where the priest says after the consecration: "Suppliantly we entreat Thee, O Almighty God, command that these gifts be carried by the hands of Thy Holy Angel up to Thy sublime altar, unto the sight of Thy Divine Majesty; that whosoever, from partaking of this altar, shall receive the all-sacred body and blood of Thy Son, may be filled with all grace and benediction through the same Christ our Lord." He hath entered into the heavens with His blood, having found eternal redemption; and there, both High-Priest and Victim, He maketh perpetual intercession for us. And He has the ministers of

His power and dispensers of His mysteries upon this earth, and what by His creative word they do, He Himself accomplishes, be it to cleanse the souls of sinners in His blood, or to nourish the hearts that He has justified with His life. "For the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread that we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?"

Wherefore St. John, in the Apocalypse, beheld in the Temple of Heaven the Son of God as the Bishop of souls, clad in the bright garments of the priesthood, offering at the golden altar that is before the throne of God; and, at the same time, standing upon that altar, and pleading as the Victim, who is the Lamb for ever slain. And the seven eyes of the Lamb and the seven horns of His power are His seven spirits sent forth into all the earth. And the four-and-twenty white-robed elders who there minister around the Divine Bishop and Shepherd of souls are the representatives of the entire priesthood of Christ, who sing this liturgical hymn: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to take the Book and to open the seals thereof: because Thou hast redeemed us in Thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us a kingdom, and priests, and we shall reign upon the earth." Stupendous is the mystery! Wonderful beyond all reach of created intellects is the extension of the sacrifice! Inconceivable to men without belief is the condescension to us sinful creatures! But God is charity. Love is His very

nature. And when the Almighty and Infinite Charity puts forth, towards the fallen creatures He would save, the supreme act of His love, however closely veiled from corporal sight, that act, from the very nature of it, must be an act of supreme condescension. The higher and more godlike the gift, and the more unworthy the recipients of its power, all the greater and more worthy of God is the condescension. What is all the condescension of God, of which humility is the reflection, but the stooping down to sinful men to save them? And He who stooped His priesthood down to the cross and to the grave, can He not stoop it down again into the breasts of us unworthy creatures? The same motive works in one case as in the other; He stoops to save mankind. One, therefore, is the High-Priest, and through His exceeding love of human souls many are the priests who share His sacerdotal power. The unction from the Divinity that fell unmeasured upon the humanity of Jesus, has fallen with measure upon us. Wherefore, my brethren, having such a High-Priest and Lord of our ministry, and such a Victim delivered into our hands, "holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens," can there be less expected of us than that, according to our grace, we should be holy in life, innocent with at least recovered innocence, and undefiled from the world?

But the pure God would have the pure and all-purifying sacrifice to be handled purely. For which reason the Old Greek Liturgy, whose clergy in

the earlier period of the Church were equally bound to celibacy with those of the West, puts this prayer, as he approaches the moment of consecration, into the secret breast of the priest: "For no one who is entangled in the desires of the flesh is worthy to approach to Thee, O King of glory. For to minister unto Thee is a great and fearful thing, even to the very Powers of Heaven themselves. Nevertheless, through Thy unspeakable and infinite love of mankind, without any change or alteration in Thyself, Thou hast been made man, and Thou art called our High-Priest, and Thou, as the Lord of all things, hast given to us the consecration of this solemn and unbloody sacrifice. . . . Thou art He that maketh the offering and art offered, Thou dost receive and art distributed, and to Thee we give the glory, together with Thy Father, without beginning, and Thy All-Holy, and Good, and Life-giving Spirit."

The first demand upon the priest to be holy arises from the purity, the sanctity, and excelling dignity of the sacrifice. "They offer the fire-offering of the Lord, and the bread of their God, and therefore they shall be holy." The second demand upon their personal holiness is in that they offer, in the power of Christ, and in the name of the Church, which is His body. "They are consecrated to the Lord, and eat the bread of their God, and therefore they shall be holy." The third demand upon them to be holy is that they represent Christ to the people, and are the channels to them of His light and grace, and have received

power as well over the mystical body of Christ, which are the faithful, as over His very body and blood. "Let them be holy, because I am holy, the Lord, who sanctify them."

In the priests of the Old Law the sanctity was legal; in the priests of the New Law it is interior and spiritual. Of the Sion on which the Holy Ghost came down in fire was David inspired to sing: "Let Thy priests be clothed with justice: and let Thy saints rejoice." And God answered David's prayer: "I will clothe My priests with salvation; and her holy ones with exceeding joy. There will I bring forth a horn to David: I have prepared a lamp for My anointed." The horn of David's strength is Christ. The lamp prepared for God's anointed is the light of justice in the flame of charity. And so of this Sion God says in Isaias: "I will not rest until her just one come forth in brightness, and her saviour be enkindled as a lamp." He clothes His priests in justice, and then do the Saints rejoice with salvation, and then they rejoice exceedingly. Ah! my brethren, the truly holy priest causes many holy ones to rejoice. He multiplies the holy ones. Through Him the holiness of Christ shines to the world anew. When we would weigh the worth of a priest we must take St. Augustine's standard. He must not be measured, says the great Father, by what he holds in common with good and evil men, because the sum of his value is in his sanctity.¹

The question then arises, and asks for reply:

¹ S. August., *De Civit. Dei*, I, xx. c. 21.

Apart from all incidental obligations, and considered simply as a priest of the pastoral order, what is the law and rule of sacerdotal sanctity? With what can it be compared? And how shall we bring it out? As I approach this vital question I see three obstacles, in the shape of three pre-conceptions, that stand in my way, and which it will be my first duty to remove.

The first is a misapprehension of the sense of the word *sæcular* as applied to the diocesan or pastoral clergy.

The second is a misapplication of theological light.

The third is a misconception of the character of that sanctity which God calls for in the priestly order.

I do not say that these misconceptions are set up in formal theory, but that, owing to the want of precise examination and of clear apprehension, a misty haze has been allowed to settle about these points that exerts a retarding influence on but too many of the pastoral clergy.

In his three books in defence of the monastical life, St. John Chrysostom exalts its great holiness and security, and likens it to the life of angels. Yet, in the midst of his fervent eulogy, the Saint stops to lament that, through a custom brought in by men without a warrant from the Gospel, the Christian laity in the world should be distinguished from the monks by the name of *sæculars*. He says that this designation is undoing the world, for that it causes the laity to think that diligence

in aiming at a holy life belongs to monks, and that the laity may live carelessly. Not so, says the Saint, not so; but the same precepts and counsels of holiness are given by our Lord to all men. He addressed the Beatitudes to all without distinction, and the command to love God with our whole heart, and mind, and strength, and the injunction to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect, were addressed to all. When our Lord intended to make a limitation He expressed that limit clearly, as when He said on virginity: "All do not take this word; let them who can take, take it." As St. Paul likewise said: "Concerning virginity I have no command of the Lord, but I give counsel." And the golden-mouthed Saint concludes that all are called to a perfect life, although the monastical is the most secure.¹

If I next quote a passage at length from St. Francis of Sales, it is because this most holy Bishop and learned theologian has clearly summed up in it the doctrine of St. Bernard, of St. Thomas, and of St. Bonaventure, indeed of all the greatest and holiest divines, and that he addresses it to the laity. In his *Introduction to a Devout Life*, St. Francis says: "Charity alone puts us into the perfect life. The three great means for acquiring charity are obedience, chastity, and poverty. Obedience consecrates our heart, chastity our body, and poverty our means, to the love and service of God. These are the three branches of the spiritual cross; but all three rest on the fourth, which is

¹ S. J. Chrysost., *Contra Impugnatores Vitæ Monast.*, I, iii.

humility. On these three virtues, as they are solemnly vowed, I will say nothing; because this regards religious persons. Nor will I speak of these virtues as they are simply vowed. For although vows give much grace and merit to the virtues, yet it is not necessary to vow them to render us perfect, provided we practise them. When they are vowed, and especially when they are solemnly vowed, they put a man in the state of perfection. But to put us in perfection itself, it is enough that we practise them. For between the state of perfection and perfection itself there is a great difference. All bishops and religious are in the state of perfection, although it is but too visible that all are not perfect. Let us then endeavour to put these virtues well into practice, each after his vocation; for although they may not put us into the state of perfection, they will not the less give us possession of the perfect life. And so we are all bound to practise these three virtues, although not all after the same manner." St. Chrysostom lamented the spiritual result of calling the laity by the name of *sæculars*, whereas St. Paul says to all: *Nolite conformari huic sæculo*; "Be not conformed to this world." In the Middle Ages, after the sacerdotal order began to be systematically united with the religious state, and men under religious rule were called to a great mission in the Church, and even at times to the pastoral care, by way of distinguishing the one class of priests from the other, the term *sæcular*, which had heretofore been limited to the laity, became attached to the diocesan clergy.

From custom the designation glided into the canons, and so this infelicitous term became consecrated by ecclesiastical usage. It is not for me to censure this use, but to guard against its abuse. And the misapprehension of which I speak springs from the vague and hazy notion that the sæcular clergy are not called to the holy, interior, and perfect life, but that they may walk more freely in the sæcular path than is allowed to religious men under like circumstances. Whereas the term sæcular refers simply to the sphere in which their ministry is exercised. They have their work in the world, but in no sense of spiritual laxity do they belong to the world. This our Lord expressly said: "Ye are not of the world, as I am not of the world." Theology places the bishops in the highest state of perfection, and yet they have a work to do in the world that is greater than that of their clergy. The less the clergy belong to the world, the stronger they are to convert the world. It is the unworldly saints and servants of God who, in the sæcular priesthood, have accomplished great things for the salvation of souls; and our Lord put the true spirit of the missionary priest before us when He said to the seventy-two: "Go: behold I send you as lambs among wolves, carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes; and salute no one on the way."

It is much to be regretted that the instructions and prayers that we hear at our ordination are not more deeply meditated on in our after-life, for there we have the true sense of the Church upon the perfection demanded of ecclesiastics. The very

initiation into the clerical life so closely resembles the initiation into religious life, that their language is almost identical. It emphatically inculcates the abandonment of the sæcular life for a life devoted to God. In giving the tonsure the bishop implores of God that to His servants, hastening for His love to cast the hair from their head, He would give His Holy Spirit "to keep always in them the habit of religion, and to protect them from worldly hindrances and from sæcular desires." Whilst the hair is being cut from the crown of their head they declare that "the Lord is the portion of their inheritance, and their cup." Before investing with the clerical habit, the bishop prays for blessing on them who, in God's name, "are going to have the sacred habit of religion put upon them;" and whilst investing them he says, "The Lord clothe thee with the new man, who is created in justice and holiness of truth." And finally he prays that "they who have cast off the *ignominy* of the sæcular habit, may be cleansed from all *servility* of the sæcular habit." Such, my brethren, is the Church's true sense of the ecclesiastical spirit. When St. Francis of Sales received the tonsure, and some who were present, struck with his demeanour, declared that he might have been receiving the religious habit, the Saint emphatically replied, "It *is* the religious habit."

The second obstacle I find on my path is the misapplication of theological light. Moral theology has two branches; the one regards the judgment of sin, the other the cultivation of virtue. But the

first is much more cultivated in the schools as a science than the second. It prepares the priest to be the judge of consciences, and under the specific name of moral theology it teaches the commandments of God and the Church, and the obligations of life in all its states. Applied to individual cases it takes the name of casuistry. It draws the line both fine and close between what is of obligation and what is not of obligation; between what is of sin and what is not of sin. The other branch is that which is properly called spiritual or ascetical science; it fits the priest to guide souls in the more generous way towards God, and to build them up in virtue and holiness, for it supplies the motives and the means for advancing in the way of perfect life.

But whilst the first of these sciences is chiefly cultivated in the schools, and afterwards kept up in the conferences, the second is not systematically taught amongst us, but is left in great measure to take care of itself, and is only obtainable by private zeal and devotion. A certain amount of spiritual reading, with but little order or method, is most commonly the sum of attainment in this direction. But is it not obvious, my brethren, that what a man has learned scientifically he will hold to the most tenaciously? He will hold it in clear principles, in lucid order, and as a habit of the mind. He has a promptness in putting it in exercise, and the ready application of his exceptional skill in that one direction will always be to him a singular gratification. But the whole tendency of judicial theology

is to draw sharp the lines between the strict obligation of duty and the liberty of taking one's own way. Reduced to its ultimate principle, it is the science of discovering the least amount of obligation and the small claim of duty that is consistent with an easy conscience. And when we have to judge some poor soul who has fallen into sin, or into peril of sin, and to apply the means to bring that soul back into the way of duty, nothing can be more valuable and efficacious.

But here, my brethren, is the peril and the snare ; lest, vain of our juridical light in theology, and neglecting the higher light that leads up to God, we measure the calls of duty, the precepts of authority, and our very vocation to sanctity by the lower light of legal obligation rather than by the higher light of perfection. Lest we run our course by the ropes beyond which there is palpable offence, and not by the rule of sanctity. Lest we comfort ourselves with the notion that perfection is an ivy that only grows on monastic walls. If we pervert our theological light in analysing the claims of duty, when God is calling us to act in all generosity and charity, instead of rising to the mark of our supernal vocation, we shall go down and down until we touch the common level of human weakness. Our spirit will be languid, our ministry will suffer loss, and moanings will be heard in the hearts of the faithful, not loud but deep. "What a great deal of good might be done were it not for the priest!" If the faithful are keen though commonly silent judges of what becomes the priest,

it is because they carry the true type of sacerdotal sanctity in the deposit of their faith. The man of God is he who follows the inspirations of God, which are always generous and noble. But if we attempt, in our theological dexterity, to run ourselves upon the line of obligation, we shall be frequent trespassers, and shall damage ourselves in irrecoverable ways. The Divine way open to the priest is that of holiness and generosity.

The third obstacle of which I spoke is the practical misconception of the character of that sanctity which God demands of the sacerdotal order. In some degree this arises from misconstruction of the term *sæcular*; in some greater degree from the misapplication of judicial theology; but the principal cause of the misconception is the want of clear, cogent, and definite teaching of the sense in which the Church regards the character of the priest, and what her great divines have said upon the sanctity which that character demands.

In those earlier ages of the Church when, as a common rule, the monastical and sacerdotal states were separate, the priest was held up as a model to the monk, and as belonging to the higher order of sanctity of the two. We have examples of this teaching in the Dionysian book on the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, in the writings of St. Jerome, of St. John Chrysostom, of St. Isidore of Pelusiote, and of other fathers. The holiest Saints of the monastic life shrank from accepting the priesthood with an unspeakable reverence and fear. They saw in it a dignity so divine and an office so holy as to exceed

the strength of men and of angels. They dared not think that they could reach a sanctity commensurate with its responsibility. "Think what those hands should be," says St. Chrysostom, "and what that tongue, to utter those words. What can be thought of more pure and holy than the soul that receives so great a spirit?"¹ "Pure even from remote imaginings should his mind be who ministers in things so Divine," says the writer of the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*. "The cleric is the professor of sanctity," says St. Augustine. "A priest is nothing if he be not holy," says St. Thomas of Villanuova. "The pastors of the New Law," says the Catechism of the Council of Trent, "are nearer to God, and ought to be transformed from brightness to brightness, as from the spirit of the Lord."

The interior virtues cannot be measured, nor can we take the quantities of spiritual perfection. For they are the steps of the soul's progress towards the Infinite Good. And yet we have a principle by which to test the perfect disposition; a principle that St. Bernard never tires of teaching, nor St. Bonaventure after him. And it is this: that to aim at perfection and to strive after it, is taken for perfection; whilst not to aim and to strive after it, is to be far from it.

You, my brethren of the religious life, to whom these principles are so familiar, can have no wish to hold them exclusively. Rather would you say with the Prophet: "Would that all might prophesy, and all might have the spirit of God."

¹ S. J. Chrysost., *de Sacerdotio*, I, vi. c. 4.

To answer the question that I have raised I must invoke the great divines. And first let us hear the theologian by eminence of the best Patristic times, and he may be accepted as representative of his brethren. In his Apology for his flight from ordination, St. Gregory Nazianzen says: "I dare not affirm that he who is called to form souls to virtue is adequately prepared by keeping himself as pure as possible from the stain of sin, unless he be well advanced in goodness. He must expunge all evil impressions from his soul, and write better in their place, so that he may proportion his virtue to the dignity of his ministry. Nor should he set any limit to his progress in the perfect life, but make each step a footing from which to step on higher. Let him make no great thing of surpassing numbers in holiness if he still fall short of the greatness of his calling. To measure what he owes to God Almighty, the beginning and end of all things, by comparing himself with other men, is a poor standard for one whose virtue should be compared with God's rule in the Divine law."¹

St. Thomas has treated the question of clerical sanctity with his wonted precision as well in his Tractate on the Perfection of the Spiritual Life as in his *Sum of Theology*. Perfection, he says, consists primarily in the love of God as the Supreme Good; and secondarily, in the direction of that love to our neighbour, with whom God has associated us, and whom we should help with loving service towards the same Divine Beatitude. This twofold

¹ S. Greg. Nazian., *Orat.*, I.

love, flowing from one principle of charity, is the true perfection of life. But a man is carried up in the love of God in proportion as he is free from the impediment of those other affections that war in his concupiscence. And when he makes the three great renunciations, and makes them permanently by vow, his renunciations are a life-long worship and a life-long sacrifice; and if he be faithful, they put him on a permanent way towards the interior perfection of charity. This is the *state* of religious men, a state that aims at perfection.

But there is higher *state* of perfection than that of the religious man, based as it is in permanency upon a higher principle; and this principle is the perfect love of souls entrusted to us in the pastoral care. This is the state of bishops, the most perfect of human states, not only aiming at perfection but implying perfection. As the religious state rests on the permanence of a threefold renunciation made to God, that removes the obstacles to perfect charity; so the state of bishops is based on the permanence of a threefold love of souls committed to their charity and care by the ordinance of God. This pastoral charity contemplates those souls as God's creatures, in God's image made, and capable of God. This pastoral charity loves and does good even to them who hate and persecute. The bishop whom it animates both spends himself and is spent in toil and care and suffering for the good of souls. He is the good shepherd who lays down his life for his flock. And "greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

The religious man brings himself to God: the bishop brings himself to God, and with him many others. The religious man is intent on his own perfection; the bishop is intent on perfecting many souls. The cause cannot be less than the effect, and he who perfects others must himself be perfect. Not only, then, is the state of bishops the more perfect of the two states by reason of its higher principle, but likewise by reason of the more intense, the nobler, and the wider scope of that charity towards God in many souls, to which he is bound by his office and calling.¹ After this exposition the Angelic Doctor points out that, notwithstanding their respective states of perfection, unhappily there are both religious and bishops who are far from perfect; whilst happily there are other souls that, although outside the states of perfection, are yet actually perfect through their grace and charity. So that charity is always the test of actual perfection.

Then the luminous Doctor and Saint evokes another principle out of the ecclesiastical state itself as calling for perfection of soul. A participated care of souls, exercised by a priest under a bishop, may not have that permanence that constitutes a *state*; but the sacred orders themselves at least have a permanent and unchangeable character. Their grace, their spiritual dignity, and the relations in which they constitute us towards Christ Himself in the Holy Sacrifice and the Divine administrations, form the basis of a demand upon

¹ S. Thom., *opusc.*, xvii., *de perfect. Vitæ Spiritualis, per totum.*

us for high interior perfection. So, writing on the *Sentences*, St. Thomas says: "Whosoever are devoted to the Divine mysteries should be perfect in virtue."¹ Again, in the Supplement to the *Sum*, he says: "For the rightful execution of orders, common goodness will not suffice, but an excelling goodness is required."²

In his *Sum of Theology* itself, the Angelic Doctor thus concludes: "If a religious man be not in orders, it is clear that the dignity of the cleric surpasses that of the religious, because his order exalts him to those nobler ministrations in which Christ Himself is served at the altar; for the which a greater interior sanctity is required than the religious state requires." For which reason Dionysius says in the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, that "the monastical order should follow the sacerdotal orders, and by imitating them ascend to Divine things." Wherefore, all things else being equal, if he who is in sacred orders does anything against sanctity, he sins more grievously than a religious who is not in sacred orders, even although the religious be bound to regular observance, to which he who is in sacred orders is not bound."³ Then he observes that priests who have care of souls in the second place, and in dependence on their bishop, come nearer to bishops than to religious in respect to care of souls; although they are less like to bishops than religious are with respect to that perpetual obligation which a *state* of perfection requires.⁴ Yet is

¹ S. Thom., *In Senten.*, d. xxiv., 9, 3.

² *In Supp.*, 9, 35.

³ S. Thom. 22, Q. clxxxiv., A. 8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, ad. 5.

it not to be overlooked that a certain character of permanence is given to the English missionary priest by reason of his oath to serve the mission for life, an obligation in *bonum Ecclesiæ*, from which the Holy See can alone absolve him.¹

The next divine whom I quote is one whose authority stands very high on spiritual questions. In his Tract on the Hierarchical States of Life, the celebrated John Gerson says: "The state of priests having care of souls is not merely a state of perfection to be gained, but a state of perfection to be exercised; forasmuch as it not only involves the duty of bringing souls back to God, but of purifying, illuminating, and perfecting them by hierarchical acts. For the which reason this state is superior in the hierarchical order of the Church to the state of simple religious."² I come next to the great authority of Suarez. After carefully investigating the question in his Treatise on the Religious State, he concludes, that "in a certain way the sæcular clergy are placed in the inchoate state of perfection, because they have a ministry that greatly excels, by reason of which they are obliged to great virtue."³ And treating professedly of the state of priests with cure of souls, which he calls the *status pastoralis*, he says: "In theory it may be conceded that the pastoral state is more perfect than the simple religious state." But he

¹ *Vide* Constitut. of Alexander VII., *cum circa juramenti*; also the Decree of Propaganda, April 27, 1871.

² Gerson, *de Statu Curatorum*.

³ Suarez, *de Statu Relig.*, c. 14.

significantly adds that "practically that condition is rarely fulfilled."¹ The Council of Trent points to the same conclusion in saying that "small offences in others become most grievous in the clergy."²

To this teaching we may add the words of St. Charles Borromeo, addressed to his clergy in his fourth Council: "If," he says, "there be great sanctity required in the other institutions of Christian piety, assuredly ought that sanctity to be greater in you, who are the ministers of God's mysteries, and the dispensers of His grace." Nor ought we to forget the piercing words of that almost Divine book, the *Following of Christ*: "If thou hadst the purity of an angel, and the sanctity of John the Baptist, thou wouldst not be worthy to receive and handle this sacrament. . . . Behold! thou art made a priest. . . . Thou hast not lightened thy burden, but art now bound with a stricter bond of discipline, and art obliged to a greater perfection of sanctity."

The conclusions I have quoted from those great divines are not to be looked upon as mere theological speculations. They are quoted for the guidance of the clergy in such practical books as the *Selva* for clerical retreats of St. Alphonsus; in the *Parocho Istruito*, a book for clerical guidance esteemed at Rome and throughout Italy; and in the Manual of Ecclesiastical Life drawn up for the use of the Pontifical Seminary of Pius IX. But let us pass to yet higher authority.

¹ Suarez, *de Statu Relig.*, c. 21.

² Con. Trid. Sess., 22, c. 1, de Reformat.

In her Sacred Rites of Ordination the Church has expressed the sanctity that becomes her priests with a most clear and constant voice. What are the seven orders by which we slowly ascend to the sacred priesthood but so many new departures from the world, and so many new ascents of the sanctuary, each calling for a greater degree of sanctity until we reach the Holy of Holies. The engagement to chastity is the equivalent of a vow. The promise of obedience makes the canons our religious rule, and the voice of the bishop as the voice of Christ, whose place he holds. And St. Ambrose says that "the form of all justice" in the priest¹ includes the contempt of money. The Church says, in his ordination, to the priest: "The Lord chose the seventy-two, and sent them two and two to preach; that in word and act He might teach the ministers of His Church that they ought to be perfect, founded, that is, in the power of the twofold love of God and of our neighbour. . . . Wherefore in your conduct hold fast to the integrity of a chaste and holy life. Understand what it is that you do. Imitate that which in your hands you hold; so that, celebrating the mystery of the Lord's death, you may come even to the mortifying of your own members from all vices and concupiscences. Let your teaching be the healing medicine of God's people. Let the odour of your life delight the Church of Christ, that by word and by example you may build up the house which is the family of God."

¹ S. Ambros., *de Officiis*.

In the Preface the bishop prays "that the form of all justice may shine forth in them." After investing them with the chasuble, he asks that "they may be established in those rules of discipline that Paul delivered to Timothy and Titus;" and that with inviolable charity, full of the Holy Ghost, "they may rise up into the perfect man, into the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ, in the day of God's just and eternal judgment." And as their ordination nears its accomplishment, they hear those tender and trusting words of their Lord: "I will no longer call you servants, but My friends; because you have known all things that I have wrought in the midst of you."

Such, my brethren, is that type of sanctity which the Church looks for in her priests. And the more worldly the atmosphere in which their work is cast, the more they stand in need of that self-discipline which gives spiritual strength to enable them to resist its influence. They need interior perfection to compensate them for what outwardly they sacrifice; they need it as a power with which to bring other souls to perfection of life. But perfection of life comes of desire, of effort, of combat, and of patient growth. We are not called without receiving the graces of our calling. God never fails us. When we fail Him, it is through departing from our interior, where light and the Divine operation are left behind, and we wander abroad in extroversion of soul.

Exceedingly great is the responsibility of training our young aspirants to the sanctuary. What is

planted in the root will grow up in the tree. Whilst youth is open, susceptible, and responsive, whilst habits are yet in process of formation, whilst the graces of vocation are fresh to the spiritual sense, and penetrate sharply, and wound the heart with love and wonder, let some holy man full of the sacerdotal spirit mould the young cleric to the virtues of his state, and draw up into the light the germs of sanctity which the Holy Spirit has planted in his soul. Never should the culture of his spirit be postponed to the culture of his mind. Light and holiness come from one Divine Source, and it is our duty to keep them united. What is light without force? And spiritual force lies in accumulated graces, from which comes forth the virtue to heal souls, and to enkindle in them the flame of Charity. But the capacity for charity is founded in the depth of humility. And spiritual fertility is so far apart from earthly fertility that it depends for its force on holy purity.

“The flame of the pastor is the light of the flock,” says St. Gregory, “and so holy should be the life and conduct of the priest, that in him, as in a mirror, his people may see both what to follow and what to shun.”¹ Study gives knowledge, but holiness gives wisdom. Knowledge is *not* power, but the light that guides power to its aim. And what attraction is to the material world that charity is to the spiritual world; it is the Divine force that draws souls freely to God as to their centre and place of rest. And one priest who works in the

¹ S. Greg. Mag. *in Registro*.

spirit of the God of charity will do more for His glory in saving souls than a hundred who work in their own spirit.

The "form of all justice" which the Church asks for us at our ordination is most certainly that charity which is the bond of perfection. Coming in sweetest flame from God, it attracts us to ascend from virtue to virtue until we reach its very fountain. "This charity," says St. Augustine, "is the truest, fullest, and most perfect justice;"¹ and to that justice of charity is the pastoral priest more fully bound than other Christians, forasmuch as our Lord has based the pastoral care in love of Himself, and the dignity of the sacred ministry and the character of the priesthood in a nearer reflection of His own eternal office. The priest who loves perfectly will do great things and count them little; will do many things and count them few; will work a long time and count it short; for to him, as to Jacob, the days will seem few by reason of the greatness of his love.

May charity sign our decrees, and the Holy Spirit seal them with His wisdom! May the unction of Jesus bring them into hearts to which they are directed, and His blood make them fruitful!

¹ S. Aug., *L. de Nat. et Gratia*, c. 4, 2.

THE CENTENARY OF ST. EDMUND'S COLLEGE

THE SERMON PREACHED AT THE HIGH MASS OF THANKSGIVING,
July 25, 1893,*

BY REV. WILLIAM LLOYD
(Vice-President of the College, 1883-87).

“Laudate pueri Dominum. Sit nomen Domini benedictum ex hoc nunc et usque in sæculum, qui habitare facit sterilem in domo matrem filiorum lætantem.”—Ps. cxii.

“Et implebo domum istam gloria, dicit Dominus exercituum; major erit gloria domus istius novissimæ plus quam primæ, dicit Dominus exercituum.”—AGG. ii.

Boys, praise the Lord, &c.

MY Lord Cardinal, to-day we are all boys of this holy and fruitful mother of children, the glory

* In July 1893 the Centenary of the Foundation of the College was celebrated.

The French Revolution having brought about the downfall of Douay in 1792, many of the professors and students reassembled at Old Hall Green, where a school had existed since 1769. On the Feast of St. Edmund, Nov. 16, 1793, Bishop Douglass, to use his own words, “established the new College there, a substitute for Douay.”

Though the actual anniversary fell on November 16, it was found more convenient to hold the Centenary Celebrations at Midsummer. The following sermon was preached at the Solemn High Mass of Thanksgiving, sung by Bishop Weathers in the presence of the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the Lord Mayor of London, and a large number of bishops, clergy, and laity.

of whose second century, if one wish that lives very close to my heart be realised, shall be greater than that of her first, which is being fittingly closed by this morning's Sacrifice of Thanksgiving. Two scenes suggest themselves which may do duty for the "composition of place" in the plan of St. Ignatius. The first takes us back to a memorable month, the November of 1793. The horrors of the French Revolution were at their height. On Wednesday, the 16th of the preceding month, Marie Antoinette had been guillotined. On Sunday, November 10th, the so-called Revolutionary Army had plundered St. Dennis, and were reeling through the streets of Paris, drinking brandy out of chalices, eating mackerel off the chalice patens, the asses on which some rode caparisoned with priestly vestments and reined with stoles, mules laden high with crosses, censers, holy water vessels—the devil-possessed revellers, also in sacred vestments, halting before dram-shops and holding out ciboriums to be thrice filled—but I draw a veil over the rest, and let the procession pass onward to the Convention. And on that same Sunday, November 10th, with rites that shall also be veiled in silence, the opera singer, Candeille, rouged and in azure mantle, was seated on the high altar of Notre Dame and enthroned as Goddess of Reason. Two days later, on Tuesday, November 12th, occurs an incident nearer home, not imposing outwardly—nor for that matter was the moment when Saul, trembling and blind and helpless, was led through the gates of Damascus. A bishop, fifty years of age, and wearing

probably the lay dress of an English gentleman of his time, was alighting, with two youths growing to manhood, at the Old Hall yonder. But there is a pathos, an unconscious beauty, in the bishop's words which nothing else can replace. And every name occurring in the narrative has a character almost of sacredness about it, and deserves on such a day to be heralded aloud with honour and reverential love. It is the entry of Bishop Douglass, our father in God indeed, if ever bishop had a right to be called our father in God. The entry is familiar to you all, but it would be an outrage on the commonest gratitude not to repeat it as we are gathered for our great act of thanksgiving: "1793.—On November 12th, I took Messrs. William Beauchamp and John Law to Old Hall. And on the 16th, the Feast of St. Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, we commenced studies and established the new College there—a substitute for Douai. Mr. Thomas Cook, who had been at Old Hall Green half a year, employed in teaching the children, and Mr. John Devereux, joined the other two. These four communicated at my hands. I said Mass, and after Mass exposed the Blessed Sacrament, and these four with Mr. Potier, the President, sang the *O Salutaris*, *Pange Lingua*, *Deus Misereatur Nostri*, and *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes, ad finem*. Thus was the new College instituted under the patronage of St. Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, the afore-mentioned students recommencing their studies in divinity. *Felix faustumque sit!*" A curious contrast to those frantic orgies set on fire of hell!

That quintet (the bishop does not say that he helped out the singing) was probably not perfect in time nor tune nor massive in general effect, but no Halleluiah chorus ever yet went up to the ear of God with such overwhelming and constraining power: their *Deus misereatur nostri* was Gallican enough, no doubt, in accent and quantity, but our great High-Priest before whom the little band knelt, listened to it well pleased, and rewarded it with a Divine lavishness of blessing in which we have shared. Sixty years later, and not far from here, another scene is going forward. It is plain that God's *granum frumenti*, which the bishop's hand had planted, has come up out of the darkness to bear fruit a hundredfold. Two men are walking together, both worth noticing. The younger, then a mere vice-president, will one day be an august and influential Prince of the Church, and hierarchical chief of that Church in England. The elder is among the most distinguished of the sons whom Oxford some years earlier had given back to the unity of the Catholic faith, a type of Oxford's highest culture, a brilliant conversationalist, a vigorous and most original thinker, and what is better, in his high single-mindedness of purpose, one of the most childlike other-worldly of men. He had turned his back, as he thought, on lofty position, influence, and fame, to teach the science of God in this secluded house of God. None here needs telling that I speak of the father of the President, by whose invitation we are assembled. "What place do you think," he asks in the abrupt way so well remem-

bered of many, "the devil looks to for his most dangerous work? That building," he continued, pointing to the College. "The Catholic religion is the great hope of England. The advance of Catholicism depends under God almost entirely on a good priesthood. The large majority of priests are formed at the College." He spoke no doubt with reference mainly to London and the home counties. "If the enemy can succeed in damaging the priestly spirit at the College, the bulk of England's future priests are damaged, and the country is irreparably injured."

Allowing the widest margin for his enthusiastic devotion to the work which then filled his life, yet is it not plain that the November day we are commemorating deserves to be writ large in the annals of Catholic England? Instead of commentary, which perhaps would only weaken the emphasis of these weighty words, let me sketch another scene. The *pusillus grex* of a hundred years ago has outgrown the Old Hall as thoroughly as a full-grown man the garments of his childhood. The Old Hall still stands, but beside it stands a spacious building—not a thing of beauty perhaps—but substantial and massive enough to hold its own against the wear and tear of ages. But its chapel is a thing of beauty—a dream in stone. And not a heart this day that loves the College but will go out in blessing to Bishop Griffiths, whose ashes rest among us under the roof which he raised at a cost of long years of toil and self-denial that rose nearly to the level of privation. And in its chapel, rich in wrought stone and oak and metal, the colours

dipped in heaven streaming through its painted windows, the air vibrating with the waves of harmony rising and sinking from the majestic organ and multitudinous voices, the supreme act of the liturgy of the Church is being rendered with a pageantry in strange contrast to that November Mass of a hundred years ago. This time there is a throne; on the throne, robed in the vestments of Cardinal Prince of the Church, the vice-president of years back, now, after other dignities and burdens borne worthily of the initiative and indomitable energy of a great nature, the spiritual ruler over the greater part of the vastest and wealthiest city in the world. Another bishop, a son of St. Edmund, gladly taking a humbler part in our rejoicings, in the spirit of the Master who chose the lowest place at table, is my own revered bishop, exalted in spite of his humility to hold sway over a vast diocese, including the southern division, with its teeming and fast increasing population of this same modern Babylon, "that terrible city," as some one has called it, "whose neglect is death, whose smile is fame;" though, if I may make bold to say so, I have a suspicion that, except in as far as it affects the saving of souls, its neglect would be as welcome to his lordship as its smile. Another bishop and loyal son of St. Edmund is not here to-day, but took part in the celebration of yesterday, for whom to-day is a double solemnity and a day of double rejoicing. With full hearts we wished him *ad multos annos* as he prayed with us before the sanctuary which his hands helped to make beautiful fifty

years ago. And all three bishops now are spending and being spent, in ministering to the spiritual necessities of the territory to provide for which, the bishop made his modest beginning on that November day. I may return to this point in a moment. Meantime other bishops have gathered for this act of thanksgiving, whose honoured names are woven inseparably, like the thread through the texture, with long and eventful chapters of this first century of College life. And others, unmitred dignitaries, are among us, who in their day have stood at the helm and laboured devotedly for the interests of Alma Mater, and added their names to the roll-call that ought to be held in deference throughout Catholic England, the line of presidents of her oldest Catholic College.

And to commemorate the bishop's humble beginning, and to give God thanks for it, a host of priests and laymen have gathered, bound together by holy and beautiful ties that nowhere are stronger than in England, and bound together in this instance more closely still by one tie more—love for this home of their boyhood, where the Shekinah, the veritable presence of God, has dwelt from the day of its foundation—love for this home of their boyhood, and home of our God with us—a love reminding me often of the passionate fervour with which the hearts of the chosen people of God, aye and the Sacred Heart of Jesus our Master, clung to God's holy city. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem," as though there were such music in the name that He must needs repeat it. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let

my right hand be forgotten" (Ps. cxxxvi. 5). And of the hearts now scattered far and wide over the world, how many, as they read of these rejoicings, will turn hither as to this holy city where the blessedness of the clean of heart, even the blessedness of seeing God was theirs, and they felt themselves nearer to God than they have ever been since. "Who will grant me," will go up from many such hearts, "that I might be according to the days in which God kept me, when His lamp shined over my head, and I walked by His light in darkness, as I was in the days of my youth, when God was secretly in my tabernacle?" (Job. xxix. 2, 3, 4). And we are not His servants, but His friends, who have not chosen Him, because He hath chosen us; who heard His "Follow Me" under this roof, and answered, "Thou art the portion of my inheritance and my chalice," and followed Him; who look back to this home as our own Mount of Beatitudes, where He taught us, our Mount of Transfiguration, and maybe our Garden of Gethsemane; who knelt before this altar as He breathed upon us His "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," and the command that exalted us to be sacrificers of the one stupendous Sacrifice that belongs to the new and eternal Testament; who went forth from this altar our hands anointed with the unction of Christ's royal priesthood, to be the bearers of His glad tidings, and to stand between the living and dead, and pray for the people—is it wonderful that this should be our holy city, our Jerusalem of our joy, the most cherished and sacred spot which the world possesses?

My dear boys, why have I made no mention of you as a feature in the day's rejoicing? That reference to the chrism of the priestly anointing will explain. You are too young to know the depths of meaning of the little words "Sad with glad things gone." The handful who on that November Saturday began, or made a second beginning of, their theological studies in the Hall yonder, are gone to their place; none remain. Will any blame me if in the jubilant music of this day I cannot resist touching a minor key to repeat Ichabod. "This glory has gone from Israel" (1 Kings iv. 21). Will it be that little pitted speck in garnered fruit? or the lull that tells only of gathering energy?—"A storm was coming but the winds were still." This will be as God wills and as he whom He has set over the destinies of His Church in England shall judge best. My thoughts go back fondly to that conversation in which he had his part some forty years ago, and I leave the future with as trustful a hope as may be to Him who bids us be not solicitous for the morrow. And assuredly the Archangel Hope is hovering over this day of rejoicing whose rightful language is not speech but song, and when the earth is beautiful as if new born. The President offered me an hour for my sermon. I shall not be so wanting in magnanimity as to take him at his word—indeed, it is getting plain that I shall not travel much beyond that "composition of place," with which I started. But you will bear with me while I point out one suggestive fact

that may well enkindle our hope. Ten years after he had founded Alma Mater as an ecclesiastical College in 1803, Bishop Douglass forwarded his official report to Propaganda. The report stated that he had 86 English priests, 5 Irish, 6 French, the total, it is noticeable, not reaching 100, and in a vicariate now represented by Westminster, Southwark, Portsmouth, and a part of Northampton. This year's *Directory* puts the number of Westminster clergy at 355, Southwark at 322, Portsmouth at 108, only 15 short of 800, and I have little doubt that before to-day the even number has been completed and passed. Is not the finger of God here? And can any other religious community in the land show any results at all comparable to it? And after we have freely acknowledged the other factors in the increase, one who has an undoubted right to stand forward and say *Quorum pars magna fui* (*Æn.* ii.) is our venerable Alma Mater, pouring out year by year in a ceaseless stream of priests to be dispensers of the mysteries of God, and pouring out year by year generations of instructed God-fearing youths to stand beside their priests and lighten their burdens and brighten their dark hours with sympathy, and bear their name of Catholic without fear and without reproach, when that name was a by-word of scorn. Could God call a house to a grander destiny?

“ Oh! to side with truth is noble
When we share her wretched crust,
Ere her cause bring fame and profit,
And 'tis prosperous to be just.”

Those bad days are not so long gone. I can remember when in my Western home, as I passed to and fro between home and school I was apt to be pelted with stones because my Catholic faith was as a brand of shame written on the forehead. Other days have come, and the world no longer cares whether you are Catholic or Mohammedan or Hindu—indeed, prefers for drawing-room purposes and five o'clock teas the Hindu or Parsee, because the article is rarer. We are apt to forget the bad days that are gone, and in many ways it is as well; but in forgetting them we are forgetting the immensity of the debt which Catholic England owes to St. Edmund's. Those bad days meant rough weather for her often enough, and, indeed, her sunshine has had its share of shade. She has not escaped her scars in the fight, but she survives. And she survives, as I hope, in the strength that alone can be sure of the approving smiles of God—the strength that is made perfect in weakness. I finish with a word which, if it bears a personal aspect, bears other aspects that are far higher. I know that an idea went abroad that the tendency of my own work here was towards worship of the intellect. I need no man to warn me against the worship of the intellect. I know how base it may be, how soul-destroying it must be. I know that knowledge comes but wisdom lingers. I know that if I have all knowledge but have not the love of God I am nothing. And yet I believe in the drooping flower of knowledge—changed to fruit of wisdom—and

the flower must come before the fruit. I believe that education means the moulding of the will, the discipline of the emotions, and the development of the intellect. These three, and, if you must compare, the greatest of them is the training of the will, the moulding of the character; but the one need no more interfere with the other than the culture of the voice with the culture of hand or eye. I believe in the parable of the talents, that with talents of intellect as with other talents, they need downright work stretched through years to develop them, but if hidden away and not developed twofold, God will want to know the reason why. Is it not part of our Catholic faith to love next to our God-made-man the *Sedes Sapientiæ*, not only home and living Sanctuary of the *Sapientia Incarnata*, but treasure-house of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, foremost of which are the gifts of intellect? And is not there a certain Edmund of Canterbury whom we know as Mabel's son, not Saint merely but type and product of the highest culture of Oxford and Paris of his time? The Church could not yet spare St. Augustine of Hippo, nor St. Thomas, because their intellectual work is not done *by a long way*. Brethren, if we are to make head against the paganism of modern culture, one obvious way will be to capture the strongholds of human science, to show that there is no antagonism between the ascertained results of human science and the teachings of supernatural truth, and so to convince the enemy that there is no knowledge worth the name but that which weans

from the world, lifts above the world, and makes the world a footstool. Now that worship of the intellect is abroad, I believe the Church never had a clearer need than now of clergy and educated laity with intellects developed to the uttermost limits of their capacity. This is my educational *Credo*, and, as my last article, I believe days have come when, if St. Edmund's falls out of line and fails to equip the intellect worthily as well as teaching a solid type of Christian character, the one thing that remains to her is to gather her garments decently about her and die with what dignity may be possible.

The mere passing thought is cowardice. *Non moriar sed vivam*, says Alma Mater—she is not going to die, but live an ample life. To read the future in the light of the past is to hope with a large hope; to be solicitous for the future after such a past is to deserve the reproach from the forlorn hope of the army of God who knelt and prayed near this spot a hundred years ago, "O ye of little faith." Therefore *laudate pueri Dominum*. And when in a few moments more the bishop sings *Sursum corda*, let us lift them up; and when he sings *Gratias agamus Domino Deo Nostro*, not from lips only, but from heart and soul and mind and strength, let our answer go up, *Dignum et justum est*, strong in faith that the *Deus fortis*, as we name Him in our sublimest liturgy, the God of Hosts who maketh His arrow drunk with blood, our God who is in heaven and hath done all things whatsoever He would, will do great things for her to give

her life and make her blessed on the earth. And when the procession of years has moved round and another century has run its course, and we gathered here to-day are gathered in another temple not made with hands, with the *pusillus grex* of a hundred years ago, singing our *Deus misereatur* and our psalm of praise, may it be for another century of blessing and grace upon grace, and growth from strength; and may our canticle of gladness win for still other centuries from the lips of our gracious God, to whom a thousand years are as one day, the renewal of His promise of old: "I will fill this house with glory; I will make her as a signet, for I have chosen her, saith the Lord of hosts."

THE SPIRIT OF ST. EDMUND

THE SERMON PREACHED ON ST. EDMUND'S DAY, 1893, THE
HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDATION
OF THE COLLEGE,*

BY THE RIGHT REV. JOHN CUTHBERT HEDLEY, O.S.B.,
Bishop of Newport and Menevia.

“The Lord is good, His mercy endureth for ever ; for I will bring back the captivity of the land as at the first, saith the Lord.”—JER. xxxiii. 11.

THE celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the foundation of this House, which falls upon this very 16th of November, is an occasion of thanksgiving and of joy. When the bishop and his little flock gathered around our Blessed Lord here, on this day, one hundred years ago, there was to all appearance more reason for mourning and apprehension than for bright auguries or confident hopefulness. Yet, on the whole, this century of years now closed has been a bringing back of Juda and Jerusalem (Jer. xxxiii. 7), a bringing back

* Although, as has been explained, the centenary of the College was celebrated in July 1903, the actual hundredth anniversary of the founding of the College fell on the following St. Edmund's day. High Mass was sung by Bishop Patterson, Cardinal Vaughan assisting at the throne, while Bishops Hedley and Weathers were present in the sanctuary.

of the captivity. That is what we can see now. This House of St. Edmund is a representative part of our English Catholicism. It has stood with stability for a century, and it has progressed and thriven. This means that strong roots have been fixed in the soil of this country, and that a vigorous and fruitful tree may be reckoned upon. I do not inquire how much of that vigour and that fruitfulness are evident even at this moment. If we look upon this past century as no more than a century of beginnings, we may well praise and bless Almighty God for the stability and the steady growth of a college like this. There is no phenomenon in our present condition which is more prophetic of substantial success than the stability of our Catholic institutions. During the storms of the great Revolution the wreckage of our seminaries, our monasteries and our houses of religious women was thrown up on the shores of this country—a country strange, inhospitable, and unknown. The servants of God landed in England destitute and discouraged. They found toleration and even charity, and by degrees they settled in the south and in the north, in ancient manor-houses, on bare hillsides or in the suburbs of great cities. They set up their roof-tree and built their altar once more to the Most High God; and they began the struggle for existence. They were threatened by many dangers; by poverty, by the falling off of their number, by the lack of things academic and things religious, and even by persecution. But the remarkable thing is that few, or next to none,

of those communities which came over about 1793 have disappeared. We have them amongst us still. They have lived; they have kept up their numbers; they have contributed to the Catholic life of the country, and taken their share, each in its own way, of the labour and the sacrifice which God has inspired, and which God will also infallibly bless. Our colleges and religious houses are almost all a century old. Such stability indicates the special Providence of God. Of them we may say, as the Psalmist says of the Jewish people, "Thou hast planted their roots and they have filled all the land" (Ps. lxxix. 10). If the Lord our God has guarded them and watched over them during so many years of peril, what can be His purpose except that they shall still further develop, and with them the whole kingdom of God in this country?

That this merciful design may suffer no hindrance from ourselves—that we may enter into His counsels with all the powers of our soul—this is the reason that we celebrate a day like this with the prayer of thanksgiving, and that we venerate the name of the heavenly patron who has been to us for all the century the pledge of Divine guardianship. Even if St. Edmund of Canterbury were not your titular Saint, I should find in his life a most striking religious lesson, such as may, with the greatest profit, be brought before a community which is dedicated to the building up of the Kingdom of God. In the life of St. Edmund there is certainly little repose or stability, and apparently little success. But foundations such as God lays may

be laid in storm as well as in sunshine ; better, indeed, in martyrdom than in peace. The only condition is that those foundations be Christ's own and not another's. St. Edmund died in 1240. The national apostasy may be said to date from 1536. During that long three hundred years, religious calm prevailed in England. Her churches multiplied, her liturgical service grew richer and richer, and her simple people served God under the wings of the Church. Undisturbed stability is best shown by material evidences. At the end of this period of three hundred years there was not a Church in all Christendom whose temples, shrines, foundations, and institutions were so rich in accumulated treasures and works of art as our own. This points to a period of peace ; of continuous Masses, Sacraments, and preaching ; of faith and simplicity ; of Catholic living and Catholic dying. It was the English Saints who purchased this inestimable peace. Among them all there is no one after Thomas or Anselm, who poured himself out more generously than St. Edmund. His life culminated in the seven years of his episcopate, for which he had been prepared from his earliest youth by the Holy Spirit. Those seven years were years of martyrdom, opposition, trouble, and hardships—every one against him, the king, the bishops, and his very household ; the desolation of the Church without remedy ; even the Holy Father misinformed and hostile. And under all this his spirit was oppressed with a bitterness the like of which perhaps no other English Saint seems to have

experienced. His life was the fulfilment of the remarkable vision of his mother, who saw his head crowned with thorns all on fire.

I may, perhaps, take for granted that the outlines, and even the details, of that heroic and crucified life are known to you. Let me, therefore, ask you to follow me in reading the lesson which it teaches.

I find in St. Edmund three *charismata* or gifts: Learning, Innocence, and Austerity.

“Learning” is a very inadequate word to describe that devotion to sacred studies which, had he not been raised to the episcopate, might have been named as the very characteristic of his spirit and the purpose of his life. In his early childhood we find him at Oxford, beginning the career of his studies—where so many in that age began them—in the very porch of the church itself. We see him advancing in knowledge with the quickness of natural talent and of purity of heart. The Child Jesus sits unseen at his side in school, and appears to him visibly in the playing fields. He throws himself into the intellectual life of Paris, where Alexander of Hales was teaching, and where Albert and Thomas of Aquin were shortly to appear. He lectures amid the unorganised beginnings of Oxford. He leaves the fascination of secular studies for Divine theology, and at Oxford his disputations and discussions draw his hearers by that combined depth, fluency, and devotional feeling which mark the intellectual man who is also a Saint. In the

writings which remain to us we have the scholastic form of the *Sentences* and the *Summa*. He may indeed be justly styled the first pioneer of scholasticism in this country; and, although there is no record of the fact, he must have been a chief instrument in bringing to Oxford that Dominican Order to which all his life he was so devotedly attached; for the first two Dominican teachers had been his own disciples. St. Edmund is the intellectual founder of mediæval Oxford. He is, therefore, one of the pillars of that great edifice of scholastic theology which is with difficulty distinguished from the temple of Catholic doctrine itself.

The gift of Innocence is a special characteristic of St. Edmund. It is a peculiarly interesting feature when taken in connection with his busy uncloistered life and his wide sympathy with every form of intellectual excellence. Next to the grace of God, it seems to have come from his mother. Indeed, the very combination of which we speak—of study and innocence—was a part of her fostering system in his infancy; and there is a remarkable vision which represents her in after years as the cause of his giving up “arts” for theology. In the whole of the lives of the Saints there is no story which carries with it such an aroma—such a conviction—such an evidence—of innocence as that of the apparition of the Child Jesus, when Edmund was fourteen years old. The same impression is confirmed by the incident of his dedicating himself to Our Lady by placing a ring upon her finger in

the church of St. Mary at Oxford, pledging himself to her as the queen of virgins and the patroness of holy purity. We have similar evidence in his great devotion to St. John the Evangelist; in his habitual visits to the image of St. Frideswide, the virgin patroness of Oxford, in the little church of Binsey, and to the Ladye Chapel of St. Merri, at Paris. Those who knew him from his infancy were able to affirm that he was never stained by deadly sin. It is certain that he was keenly alive to the connection between innocence and true theological science, as taught in Holy Scripture. His studies never made him miss daily Mass or the Divine Office. He assiduously practised the sacrament of Penance. He sat at study with an image of our Lady on the table before him. He went from prayer to lecture, and from lecture to prayer. His saying of Mass inflamed every beholder with devotion. He watched night after night in the churches. Over and over again he broke off his courses of teaching, because he was afraid of vanity, and wished to flee into the solitude of religious houses and to exercise himself in offices of charity and religion. His whole life, given up as it was in great measure to study, to preaching, and finally to pastoral solicitude, is truly and touchingly described in that outburst of devotion with which he welcomed the holy Viaticum: "Thou, O Lord, art He in whom I have believed, whom I have chosen for my portion, whom I have loved, whom I have preached and taught; Thou art my witness that I have sought nothing on earth but Thee

alone!" The fruit of innocence is detachment. The innocence of the child, of the youth, of the man, ripens at last into that perfect purity of heart, to which is given the sight of God in this world and in the world to come.

The Austerity which marked the whole career of St. Edmund might seem surprising when we remember his innocence. To Catholics who are acquainted with the principles of the spiritual life, and who read the lives of the Saints, it is no surprise, but merely natural. As he owed to his mother his innocence, so to her he was indebted for his early initiation into the mysteries of the Cross. It was her spiritual discernment and Catholic instinct which made him grasp from his earliest years the great spiritual truth, that there is no advance either in holiness, or in Christian intelligence, except by the Cross. Under her direction he fasts and uses the hair-shirt in his first boyhood; she promises him that these practices will secure for him the tender solicitude of God; and we are assured by a biographer, who probably uses the Saint's own words, that when he and his young brother first went to Paris, it was in answer to this youthful austerity that their heavenly Father both kept them from bodily want and opened their minds to understand. Throughout his whole life the Saint's mortification in regard to food was so great, that he was constantly emaciated and pallid; he never seems to have lain down in bed or had a real night's rest for six-and-thirty years; and he

wore during most of his life a hair-shirt, which as described by his biographers, recalls St. Rose of Lima, or St. Peter of Alcantara. These things it would be imprudent in most of his clients to imitate, or to attempt without advice; but the spiritual lesson is for every one of us — that no man can learn Catholic truth, teach Catholic learning, preach the word of God successfully, or labour for souls with fruit, who does not live a mortified and austere life. The mystery of the Cross is this, that without the smart and the anguish of pain, willingly accepted, the best acts of love and union must be wanting in a certain intensity and efficacy. Austerity is the reparation of the sinner, the medicine of a life misspent, the healing of a nature depraved by guilt; but it is also the pure cold air which fans the innocent heart's aspirations to its God, and which draws God to speak to mind and spirit, to communicate His wisdom and to stir up His mighty power.

This College is a house for the training of those who are to labour in spreading the Kingdom of God. In the past, how many priests have left this roof to work in England!

Even now, when its schools of divinity have been removed, there are, and there will always be, many who will one day stand at the altar. And even if many of its students never enter sacred orders, yet they have a large share in that responsibility for the well-being of Catholicism and for the conversion of the country, of which none of us can divest ourselves. Nay, what is more, they are

trained, and they will be trained, as if they were to be priests; for one characteristic of our colleges from the beginning has been that, in educating lay students and Church students together, we have not lowered the standards of piety and discipline to suit the world, but have lifted it up to what is required for the child of the Temple.

Standing at the close of one century and the beginning of another—with the memories of all that has gone on within these walls present to the spirit, and anxiously looking towards the future, it seems to me that we may draw inspiration and encouragement from the thought of St. Edmund, and from this day itself.

St. Edmund reminds us, first of all, that to build up the Temple of God there must be Learning. There is no need to disguise from ourselves the fact that the English Church, during the last hundred years, has not been a learned Church. How could she be? She has had to find bread to eat and a roof to shelter her. She has had to struggle against extermination. She had to put up her altars and her elementary schools. She has had to impose hands on her priests with the least possible delay, in order to save the remnant of believers, or to cope with the numbers that asked her for sacraments. Her missions have emptied and drained her schools, as missions always do. She had no lack of great names when her camps were beyond the seas. Means, leisure, universities, and the contagion of intellectual life bred men of splendid achievements—a Stapleton, a

Harding, a Bridgwater, a Bristowe, a Cressy, a Hook, and an Alban Butler. Neither have learned men failed her even in her beginnings in this country. But learning, it seems to me, should be among our chief petitions and aspirations on this centennial day of St. Edmund. For, in the Catholic Church learning is not an ornament, or an amusement, or a luxury, but it is a necessity. Speaking of the Church at large and of the well-being of each part of the Church, we must unhesitatingly say that it is a necessity. For learning is the fuel of the Faith. It is true that learning sometimes leads to doubt or to rashness; but that is accidental. What learning really does is to widen the field on which Faith shines, and to gather together and heap up, as the priests in the Temple heaped up the victims, material of every kind for the action of Faith thereon. Faith may, and often does, burn with very little knowledge; but for a blazing holocaust of Faith there must be the treasures of the student's labour, or the infused knowledge of the Saint. Moreover, without learning the Church herself does not grow. There are men who sit at home and whose ideas circle round the fence that divides them from the outside world; and there are men who travel over oceans and continents and bring home stories of a vast and beautiful universe. The Kingdom of the Precious Blood is a limitless inheritance; but it is an inheritance to be won by the work of human faculties. Growth and development mean the co-ordination of truth, the comparison of truth

with truth, the setting out of consequences, the unfolding of meanings, and the slaying of pernicious error. And finally, learning is required to meet learning—Catholic learning to oppose heterodox learning ; or else the Church of God will be despised, and the progress of God's Kingdom prevented, In all these different fields of learning this College and other Catholic Colleges, and the Catholic body at large, have done by no means despicable things with the means at their disposal. Think of what has gone on within these walls during the century of years which has just closed. Men have studied and men have taught. For the sake of Christ's Kingdom they have spent themselves and been spent. No rich endowments, no ample scholarships have stimulated them. No crowds have come with fees in their hands for degrees and for fame. Yet they have carried high, and handed on, the torch of sacred learning. They have sent men out with classics, and with divinity, with the subtleties of Church law and the broad views of the Fathers. they have risen early and lain down late, they have sat in solitary cells, they have worked in their library, they have gathered classes around them, and the men they have sent out have taught the faithful of this country to know their religion, and to appreciate it. From the pulpit of many a church in London and elsewhere, and sometimes in books and writings, they have set forth the Church Catholic with her history and her prerogatives, and the Kingdom of Christ's redeeming love in its vastness, its divinity, and its magnificence.

They have preached the Sacred Heart, and the Immaculate Mother, and the "privilege" of Peter. We reverence these men who have held fast to study and have carried on the traditions of Christian schools. Let our younger men imitate them. Let the century that is to come seize the sacred torch and bear it on yet more boldly, yet more swiftly. Let us all understand that learning is absolutely essential. May St. Edmund foster that thought, and inspire the sacrifices necessary in order to carry it out! There is no need to be discouraged at the vast development of non-Catholic learning which has marked the last fifty years. What do we see in the labours of non-Catholics? Magazines of facts, views beyond number, historical research, and a leaven of religious error. I do not say that we are excused from meeting them on their own ground. We must meet them. We must know all their facts, weigh all their opinions, follow them into every cave and *archivum* of the past, and expose all their errors. But our own learning is really of another kind. We start from assured premises. We have the once-delivered Faith. To open out that Faith—that is our learning. To follow the Fathers, the Councils, and the Saints; to have all that has been said at our finger tips, and to add our own contribution, small or large, to the vast and glorious system—this is our learning. This we must have first. It calls for no slight labour. It requires philosophy, science, and art; history, ethics, and the science of man. When we have it, and our schools have produced a new

Albertus Magnus or a nineteenth century *Summa*, then the very weight and light of that achievement will do more for the Kingdom of God than a hundred volumes of polemics and of refutations. Nevertheless, these latter we must also have, and the Divine help which gives us the one will also give us the other. May St. Edmund intercede for us all, that there may come down on the schools of this country, during the coming century, the spirit of Wisdom, of Understanding, and of Knowledge!

But we require his holy prayers, not only that learning may grow and flourish, but that it may be learning of the real Catholic kind. There cannot be such learning without Innocence. There may be research, discovery, philosophical treatment, Scripture criticism, and many other things; but not the building up of the Faith. For this must come from the Holy Spirit; and that Spirit will not enter into a nature that is "subject to sin" (Wisdom i. 4). The traditions of the Catholic schools are that the young must be kept innocent, and that the mature must live in dread of sin, or there will be little progress in learning. Catholic schools have been always under the shadow of the Church. When we look back on the solemn and God-fearing Catholic customs of the early years of this past century, may we not fear that in the coming century the good old traditions of Catholic unworldliness will have to fight with the spirit of the age? What is it that we see? Are not our young people beginning to imbibe those hard and selfish principles which are now so

common? The innocent heart expands like a blossom to its God, to Jesus Christ, and to all that belongs to the world of Grace. There is no possibility of this to a heart which is shut up in self, and which is only interested in the chances of the present life. Yet we expose Catholic boys to this danger more freely every day. It may be impossible to help it; but the seclusion, the carefully guarded "ignorance," of our Catholic students is disappearing. Their scholastic year is far shorter than it was; they live as much in the world as at school; in the world—because strict and edifying homes are also becoming more difficult to find. They mix with non-Catholic boys who are prematurely knowing and cynical, who speak with easy toleration of religion, and who cannot even conceive what Catholic piety is. Their impressionable minds are thrown into the midst of a world in which supernatural principles, sacraments, and childlike prayer are virtually unknown. They run the risk, not only of falling into sin earlier than they might, but of suffering the destruction of that simplicity, that respect, and that strictness of ideal, which should characterise every Catholic student. Perhaps these dangers exist without any real check even with our more mature students who are actually studying divinity. College rules may be unexceptionable; but long vacations, the diffusion of print and the easiness of travelling have broken down the gates of the seminary, and even the young Levite is a man of the world, in whose intellect sacred learning has to struggle

with mental difficulties which no immature mind should even know of, in whose spirit there is working the sour leaven of independence and criticism, and in whose heart there are too often the images of things which soil it beyond the ordinary power even of grace to purify. Our forefathers strove to keep boys innocent—"ignorant," if you please, as far as innocence implies ignorance; and such ignorance might be calculated in some degree to check maturity of character, or to interfere with prospects in life. But innocence has its reward. It is only the pure of heart that see God and the things of God. It is the child of the Temple to whom God's revelation is made. And if we wish to see the glory of a great revival of Catholic theology, we must have the self-restraint and the fortitude to resist worldliness and to keep up the old Catholic strictness.

St. Edmund teaches yet a further lesson. The hope of the future, the hope of learning, and the hope of the progress of God's kingdom, lie in the Catholic tradition of Austerity. It may well be doubted whether on this head we have not departed from the practice of the men who brought back the Captivity. The records of those days tell us how they suffered and endured. They tell us of the narrow walls, the hard fare, the early hours; they tell us of economy, simplicity, and mortification. Men venerable in years and services shared alike with the latest comer. There was a tradition of silence, of repression, of severity. The cold winter's morning found the community

on their knees in the chapel. The recreation was carefully measured; study and labour filled the day; and in the refectory they read the stern yet glowing chapters of the *Imitation of Christ*. These good traditions have remained with us. But have we carried them on in their full vigour? One thing at least must never pass and be lost: whatever rules are altered, and however fashions and customs change, we must hold fast to the Christian principle that it is the Cross alone which can lead us to victory. One generation may find the Cross, where another may not look for it. We live in our own times, and the details of our life are not those which prevailed in the lives of our fathers. But it is certain that our religion is the religion of the Saints, and that no college, or Church, or people, which repudiates the Cross, can have a future. The life of the glorious St. Edmund is not out of date; it was never less so. If the ease of life and the luxury of living have increased and are increasing, they form no rule, no example, for us. We are to use the world's appliances, perhaps—but not to let it sap our Christian sobriety. We are still to be austere; to profess austerity, to uphold austerity, to understand the reason of austerity. We are to be austere, not because a simple life is a noble life, or because self-indulgence is unmanly, or because we have not the means to provide ourselves with luxuries; but because the gifts of the Holy Spirit do not operate except where they find the severity of the Cross. Nay, the very life of simplicity and modest refinement which in

these days is so commonly seen at non-Catholic schools and universities—what is it too often except the absolute antithesis to the spirit of Christ Jesus? Its motive and purpose is that very self-indulgence—the more subtly dangerous in proportion as it is less gross—which the mystery of the Cross was intended to kill.

These thoughts are suggested by the name of St. Edmund of Canterbury. These thoughts derive their appropriateness, and I will say their solemnity, from the venerable anniversary which we celebrate to-day. That these stones and these roofs which cover this spot of ground have arisen and have multiplied, we have to thank God with our fervent prayers. That there has passed here so long a history of human lives, of Christian achievement, of study, of innocence, and of the imitation of Jesus Christ—for this we must go still deeper into our hearts to find an expression of our gratitude to God. For it is not only that this has come to pass, and that its story is written in the records of the heavenly Sion and in those of our Church and country; but that this departed century is our own inheritance. Because this century has been, we are here to-day. Because these years appeal to us, we are stirred with aspirations to all that is holy and noble. These stones mark the spot; but we venerate them because they cry out, every one of them, of prayers and labours and sacrifices. The spirits of the departed fill these halls and cloisters. This Church is fragrant with the incense of how many hearts, that have lifted up their adora-

tion and their love! These precincts and all this hallowed enclosure are like the threshing-floor of the favoured Israelite on which was placed the Ark of the Lord of Hosts. This House, where our Blessed Lord has dwelt since that first Mass and first Exposition, is more truly the House of the Lord than that to which the promise was made of old: "I have chosen and have sanctified this place, that My Name may be there for ever, and My eyes and My heart may remain there perpetually" (2 Paralip. vii. 16). Our fathers could tell us, if their voice could be heard on earth now, that the choice of God, and God's sanctifying power, have indeed brooded over this sanctuary from decade to decade; they could tell us how truly and absolutely it has been His most Holy Name and no other, that has been its owner and its Master; how His eyes have watched over it, and how His Sacred Heart has blessed it and built it up. They are not here to speak for themselves: they are with God, as we hope; and their bodies are buried in peace, some on the spot of the wide battle-field where they fell in the service of their King, some near us, in your vaults, which our suffrages help to guard, as if we were still one community. As the years and days go on, we shall join the bands of those who are departed. But whoever shall come and whoever shall go, it is the same God—the God who is good, and whose mercy endureth for ever; and may it be in every sense the same House, for no House can perish which the Lord shall build up.

SERMON AT THE BURIAL OF BISHOP WEATHERS

PREACHED MARCH 13, 1895,

BY REV. ROBERT BUTLER, D.D.*

“Remember your prelates who have spoken to you the word of God. Considering the end of their manner of life, imitate their faith, Jesus Christ, yesterday, and to-day, and the same for ever.”—HEB. xiii. 7, 8.

MY reverend fathers and dear brethren in Jesus Christ, God has brought to our College here to-day a great grace, a rich fund of grace. We are laying in his grave, in this chapel so dear to him, the body of one long and dearly loved, that he may do even

* William Weathers, Bishop of Amycla *in partibus infidelium*, ninth President of St. Edmunds, was born in 1814, his parents being Welsh Protestants. After the death of his father, his mother and all her children were received into the Church. In 1828 he came to St. Edmunds to study for the priesthood. He left in 1868, having in the meantime filled almost every post in the College—Ordained Priest; Prefect of Discipline, 1840-43; Vice-President and Procurator, 1843-51; President, 1851-68. He was thus President when the chapel was opened in 1853. He assisted at the Vatican Council as theologian to the English bishops. He was the first and only Rector of St. Thomas's Seminary, Hammersmith (1869-93). Elected as Bishop-Auxiliary to Cardinal Manning in 1872, he was consecrated at the same time that Cardinal Vaughan was consecrated Bishop of Salford. The last two years of his life were spent in retirement at Nazareth

more in the sleep of death than during his laborious and devoted life.

Unworthy to speak of so noble a servant of God, I am yet deeply grateful to be allowed the privilege of attempting to describe to the young, whose home this is, a few of the features of the life of which, from now, they will daily be reminded; for though dead he yet speaketh, for he is one of those just who have been faithful unto death.

My brother priests will not be surprised if I forget that they are around me, and address my words to the present household of St. Edmund's—pardoning me too for the imperfection of what I say, and for the many omissions which time and my incompetence must force me to make. Which of us has not a testimony of his own which he cherishes and to which he would gladly give expression as he kneels by the holy dead?

My testimony covers nearly forty-five years. It begins from when I, week by week, heard that gentle voice inviting me to read chosen chapters in the *Imitation of Christ*, which would train a

House, Isleworth, where he died, March 4, 1895. He is buried in the ante-chapel at St. Edmund's, beside the tomb of Bishop Griffiths, who had been President in his College days, and whom he looked upon as his model of priestly life.

On the tomb is the inscription:—

ORA PRO ANIMA GULIELMI WEATHERS, EPISCOPI AMYCLANI,
 QUI EXIMIAE ERGA DEUM HOMINESQUE CHARITATIS
 NOBIS IN EXEMPLUM DATUS
 A SPE LONGA ET DESIDERIO AD IPSA IMMORTALITATIS PRÆMIA
 DIE 4 MARTII 1895, ÆTAT 80.
 SINE DOLORE LÆTUS TRANSIVIT.

boy in the true, deep principles of the life of the Sanctuary. Then we grew into familiarity with the unaffected preaching of his daily example. Let me recall his early unvarying preparation for the Holy Sacrifice, and afterwards as he was leaving this chapel, to go to his daily routine, the glow on his modest countenance which seemed the reflex of the smile of his Lord with whom he had been communing; then how jealous he was of his voluntary poverty, and how industrious in his ways of maintaining self-contempt—there was a great secret there. His silent, and stern self-conquest showed the manliness of a man of God. As he lies in your midst he will speak and speak on, if you will let him, of all that that example meant. And he is one of the most imitable of the great servants of God whose memory we hold dear.

How I wish I could trace his portrait as it deserves to have its lines distinctly and faithfully drawn, as an imperishable picture teaching you how to live your life and reproduce him in yourselves.

But let me pause for a moment, and ask a question. Does anything great come of a man who hides away from praise and even from observation? For the world passes by the humble of heart, and, even amongst ourselves, unreflecting beholders of such a life may call it uneventful. But have we forgotten the words of the Holy Ghost? "The patient man is better than the valiant, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that captureth cities" (Prov. xvi. 32). A very long life has tested and proved the hidden strength of that apparently

commonplace routine. He was not a creature of routine, but it was out of the ordinary flowing stream that he gathered his rich grains of gold. He was most imitable, but to be imitable is even a *Divine* characteristic. Unaffectedly, and without self-assertion, he gave his time, his mind, and his health in obedience to every call. But the obedient man shall speak of victories. And now I will venture to call his "victories" the events through which God guided him. I will ask you if they are not great events, and then I will come back to the tomb and to yourselves, and leave you to begin your reflections and to ask yourselves to profit by the treasure which is to lie in the midst of you.

Our Lord will call you wise if you copy such an example. "Thou fool" is the terrible reproach with which He threatens the man who lives for self. But the man, especially the priest, who has no self is rich unto God, and is wise according to our Lord's own reckoning. Such were the successive holy men of whom our dear father was, I may say, the last. They were confessors of the faith, who were links of a holy chain connecting the martyrs of fallen England and the Second Spring which shone upon us when the land was once more parcelled out to the shepherds of the flock in 1850. Knowing nothing but the common stream of his community life, and satisfied to gaze upwards and have God alone as the witness of his life, he was drawn on by grace, and he grew in a fixedness of purpose and a purity of devotion to God's Church which made him rich unto God.

He rose fully to the occasion when the first and the second Archbishop of Westminster gladdened us by expanding our Catholic life, bringing to priests and faithful a more ample preaching and teaching of the faith, and a richer provision of the loving methods and means of devotion. He loved the whole flock, and was ready to identify himself with any and every effort to reclaim sinners, and sanctify the servants of God in every class; especially if it cost him the sacrifice of his rest or abstinence from food or from drink. How he rejoiced in the revival of the joyous and hearty expression of love to the Virgin Mother of God! On the morning of December 8, 1854, he assembled us for a solemn procession in sympathy with the infallible declaration made that day that Mary is Immaculate. When the heroic form of devotion suggested by Blessed Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort came to be known amongst us, he rejoiced to kneel before your beautiful image of the Mother of God, and, in union with the group who spontaneously followed him, to consecrate himself to her with the closest bond which language can express. How humbly he welcomed and how earnestly he listened to every preacher who came to revive the general fervour of the College, especially if he rose to the high conception of the priesthood which I may call his own one enthusiasm. The more intimate we became with him, the more he let us know the fervour with which he cherished his Seminary life or College life as a simple pastoral priest.

But God wished to show in two ways the heroic

quality which was hidden under the gentleness of such a life as his. He was called upon to sacrifice all the innocent happiness of living here. His zealous attachment to St. Edmund's College, the fruit of years of constant fidelity had seemed to have given him a home here by right. It was no ordinary virtue which made him undertake and for years continue without a hesitation a life of literal poverty, and of still humbler routine in the theological seminary of St. Thomas. No wonder he was called providentially to be consecrated a bishop of God's Church, retaining his simplicity while gaining his dignity. And here we have to raise our minds to worthy thoughts and true conceptions of God's way. Let us look around us. God is showing unmistakable signs of a glorious hope for England. He is "returning to rebuild the Tabernacle of David which is fallen down, and to set up the ruins thereof; that the residue of men may seek after the Lord." On what will that building depend? Not only on the work of the holy men who will prepare God's way by preaching, arguing, organising; even more surely will it depend on the broad strong rock upon which the stones will rise.

On the same day, at the same altar, in the year 1872, two bishops were consecrated, one to be like Peter, one to be like John; one to be a very name for energy, and to be later the third Archbishop of Westminster; the other to be a deep and abiding influence within Holy Church, this Holy Church of Westminster, teaching and warning, winning and

charming souls young and old, especially clerics and priests, by the beauty, yet strength, of his constraining example. As he left the church where he had received the sacred unction, his characteristic self-undervaluing came upon him, and he was taking the episcopal ring from his finger, shrinking from being seen to be more than other men. A priest had to gently chide him and induce him to restore it. As we were familiar with his patient instruction on the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, beginning with Holy Fear and ending with Wisdom, so we saw in a holy bishop, living what he taught, growing old, yet always as if young—because like St. Vincent de Paul, so consistent with himself—a noble and precious soul, enriched with those gifts of God, for the instruction and training of His Church in her tenderest souls. The broad base of the building of Holy Church sustains the various and elaborate beauty of her proportions. Some of her bishops are the fathers of her home life, some are the champions of her warfare with the world. The eyes of men must not dictate our judgment. Vanity has no place in the heart of the former, nor ambition in the mind of the latter; for God is the all-sufficiency, honour, and riches of both alike. If their mind takes high flight, it is to God; if it is sober, they are loving and clinging to us. Thus it is that our dear father has deserved to come home and rest here where he will be honoured for his special graces. His honour will be the profit of his children, “for the glory of a father is a wise son.”

As successive generations kneel at his grave they will have learnt from us for what to give praise to God in His humble servant, while they will alternately, imitating us, pay the tribute of gratitude deserved by his long life and faithful labours, and pray for the repose of his soul. Holy Church does both, for one is not inconsistent with the other. They will pass on, while he will rest here in peace, reminding us of the words of the faithful Divine Rewarder: "He that overcometh I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will go out no more." He has deserved to be in death where the remembrance of the great grace of his life will ever refresh and encourage those who kneel around him.

While you have the happiness of being in this school of the Sanctuary, profit by the fragrance of this holy tomb, which tells you that God honours, even among men, one who seeks Him and Him alone in all things, with an upright heart.

THE PERSONALITY OF ST. EDMUND

THE SERMON PREACHED ON ST. EDMUND'S DAY, 1899,

BY REV. EDWARD J. WATSON, M.A.

It is with no forced, artificial joy, no mere obsequious reverence that we celebrate the festival of our holy patron, as of one whose name alone had come down to us from remote antiquity and some far-distant land, with the Church's warrant of sanctity indeed upon him, and a gathered halo of mere miraculous light about his head, but of whom, as a living and feeling man, we knew little or nothing. Very different is our acquaintance with a saint whose public life is interwoven with the civil and ecclesiastical history of the country, very different our attitude to one whose most private life we know, many of whose words and writings we inherit, so that it is not difficult to form a mental image of the man. It seems that painted portraits were rare or unknown in England in the thirteenth century, yet one representation of St. Edmund remains which looks little like a mere conventional type, but showing certain peculiarities, apparently suggested by realities, and not unlike what we might expect from what we know. His sacred relics, too, prove him to have been nearly six feet in height ; and we can judge the inevitable effects of his ex-

treme austerities in an exceeding pallor of the countenance and a slender form. I think I see him here, a venerable figure of noble stature, clad in his long grey cloak of camlet, standing as was his wont in prayer. How wan his face and pinched, withal how delicate! and as he prays, the double aureole of intelligence and charity scintillates about his features. His was a face more gentle on the whole, perhaps, than strong, yet it must have had those features which mark both lofty thoughts and tenacity of purpose.

Well now, is it not one little human link with him that he was born so near us? Why, you young men might walk to Abingdon in a day, especially if you were stimulated by the thought of seeing the very church he frequented as a child. And another link that socially he was one of us, of humble origin, son of parents in a simple trade, of very moderate means, but of very high ambition for their children, ambition that is not of the vulgar sort? His holy mother probably never dreamt of an archbishopric for her little son. Her aim was higher; she did her utmost to start him on the uphill road to sanctity. Besides the long devotions and self-restraint to which she accustomed her boy, from the first, little is told us of his childhood; and none will love him less for that little—his one innocent escapade of running out before Mass was quite over to have a game with other little fellows. But on the whole he seems to have been far too docile at that early period for any action of his own. It was when he had been sent to school at Oxford

and had passed into the class of elder boys that we first learn of what stuff he was made, and that by an act entirely his own, and of a dramatic character. What an affecting scene it was, if one could have watched it, in St. Mary's Church, the innocent youth at the feet of his mistress' statue renouncing for ever the suggestions of the flesh, and amid a shower of tears and protestation of pure eternal love, taking Mary for his spouse, and setting a ring upon her finger to plight his troth! That vow he never broke, nor wished to break, but it was for *fear* of ever failing that he waged war against the flesh, perpetually, ruthlessly, with weapons which his mother had taught him to use, which make our pampered frames shudder to think of: in particular the hair-cloth shirt constantly worn and drawn so close about the body with knotted cords that he could scarcely bend; the life-long habit of but a few hours sleep taken not in bed but on a bench and in his clothes; then matins at midnight, and the rest of the night spent on his knees in church, whence he stirred not till the morning bell called him to study.

Such were his habits during his higher course in Paris, and, notwithstanding such fearful drawbacks to study as we should account them now, he was one of the best students, graduated as Master of Arts with distinction, and lectured publicly on secular subjects. He was then about twenty-two. Innumerable details of his life, derived from the contemporary chronicles, registers, and other documents, are well known to you, and time will

not allow of my doing more than reminding you of the chief steps in his constant ascent in life—how from Paris he returned to Oxford, bringing with him, if tradition speaks truly, the invaluable study of Aristotle; how, dissatisfied with secular studies, he took a long course of theology, and lectured publicly in the highest of all sciences; how about the year 1214, when he was thirty-five years of age, he was ordained priest, and reached the height of his own ambition in the evangelisation of the poor. *Ascensiones in corde suo disposuit.*

But men designed other things for him, and he, without quitting his evangelic honours, became Canon and Prebendary of Salisbury, and so remained till God called His faithful servant to a supreme vocation. To the Primacy? yes, both of dignity and of suffering. Elected with the unanimous vote of the Chapter of Canterbury and the most favourable public opinion, he was only persuaded to consent by the bishop's entreaties, by the argument that if he refused some foreigner, incapable, perhaps, and avaricious, might obtain the seat, and by the possibility that to refuse might be a mortal sin.

But having once consented, he rose with unexpected vigour to the greatness of his position. And he took that leading part in public affairs which the circumstances of the time demanded of the first bishop, and for a time his remonstrances with the king had remarkable success, to the great advantage of the country.

Now elevation to high office, as we all know, has had at times very marked and very opposite effects. It has been to the unworthy an occasion of complete moral reformation, and it has been to the worthy, alas! an occasion of corruption. What effect was the promotion to have on the character of Edmund Rich? Would he argue, as he well might, that such dignity and such labour would render necessary great changes in his former habits? Privately he made none whatever. There was the same abstemiousness in food, rest, raiment; the same positive mortifications; the same prayerful habits; the same sweetness and gentleness of disposition.

His ecclesiastical duty gave to him but a larger vineyard, a more numerous flock. With the utmost patience and kindness he visited his diocese and received his people. And none too poor to be comforted by him—the more abject, the more welcome they were to him.

His pastoral office, so full of solicitude, was the means of greater merit, but the fiery trial of his perfection lay not in that field of hard but peaceful labour. No man ever realised more bitterly the truth of our Master's words: "*Inimici hominus domestici ejus.*" Not that I mean *domestici* in the literal sense, for no one ever had more attached familiar friends—among them his brother, chancellor, chaplains, secretaries, chamberlains. All knew him in his private life, even in his chamber, where the opinion of heroism is so apt to vanish; but he was a hero to them all.

No; I refer of course to the mischievous faction of his chapter who influenced nearly all the rest. Degenerate monks, they seemed to have lost the spirit of religion, and a base spirit of the earth had taken its place; but their most damning fault was that they could not appreciate their saintly archbishop. It was to be expected that they would not submit to his measures of reform. Edmund found himself in a nest of human hornets, who stung without pity, and would never in the least forego the slightest hope of advantage. And what did they care that he went one day into their chapter in the humblest possible guise, and proposed terms of agreement almost entirely in their favour? To no purpose; he who hated litigation was forced in the interests of his see to defend a series of suits of the most vexatious character. It would be far too long to tell the sordid tricks that were played on him, the opposition, rebellion, insolence, insults he had to bear. What is of value to us to know is the inflexible patience, at once, and inflexible firmness of their archbishop.

The same heroic qualities were seen in his contest with the king. That bishoprics and benefices falling vacant should be kept vacant in order that the revenues might be applied to purposes of State, was to our saint a monstrous fraud. In this he was by no means singular, and it seems at first that no other view is possible. St. Edmund at least appears never even to have thought of yielding here. Possibly, however, had the money been all well spent, something might have been said for

the king in days when taxation was so difficult, when ecclesiastical property, even with all its burdens, was very great in proportion to all other property, and when there was no lack of clergy. At any rate, the holy father himself, in the person of his legate, did not see his way to support the archbishop against the king.

That was to the true ecclesiastic the final, fatal blow. He could bear the enmity of all others in the world, but when the Father of Christendom himself was against him, and annulled all his acts in the cause he held so just and necessary, then there seemed to fall on him the shadow of his Master's dereliction. He was at last broken-hearted. He had borne the wealth and dignity of his office with a grace and spirit wholly unimpaired, but now he bowed his head, as his biographer finely says, *succumbens oneri non honori*.

He remembered his martyr predecessor, who indeed remembered him, and whom he now resolved to follow to the same asylum.

The long sea-passage from a point near Sandwich to Gravelines was never so stormy as his course for the last eight years ashore, and his arrival at last in the centre of France, among the Cistercians of Pontigny, was as the entry into a haven of calm, and rest, and peace. The short three weeks with them was a most blessed period of refreshment to the afflicted man of God, whose great delight had always been to join religious exercises. But our chief interest in that retreat is due to the literary legacies of the period, especially the fully recorded

sermon preached to the monks, and the little treatise of Christian doctrine called *Speculum Ecclesiæ*, a work remarkable for being at once most systematic and full of most fervent love of Christ. But he was not yet at the end of his weary way. At the bidding of physicians (for his health had long been broken) he removed to Soissy, where the Canons Regular had the honour of sheltering his last moments.

There let us follow him and look in upon the last scene of all in that eventful drama, but softly, with all reverence, for it is the death-chamber of a saint.

The chamber, I say, not the bed, which even now he still despises, sitting in a chair and resting his head upon his hand. The mortal sickness which had seized him before he left his native land has nearly run its course. It is evidently time to prepare for the very last stage of his journey. The Holy Viaticum is brought, and no sooner has he received the Divine food than he is rapt in ecstasy, and all around him draw near in astonishment to witness the light which envelopes him, and reddens all the ashy pallor of his face as with the reflected blush of some unearthly sunset.

Then it was that, coming to himself again, he turned to his friends, and with pleasantry quoting a common convivial jest of his day, that the seat of happiness is in the stomach: "But," said he, "I say that happiness goeth into the heart." Then came extreme unction, and after that he took the crucifix, which he kissed with extraordinary fervour, and

washing the wounds with water (as though inspired to make himself a new sacramental), he drank it with the words, "Exhaurietis aquas de fontibus Salvatoris."

Through all his sickness he had never forgotten his old friends the poor, ever with him, and now when he could no longer crawl to the gate he sent them still his liberal alms. Much more than would he remember his own attendants, and seeing them in tears about him, at the cost of great efforts he wrote letters in their behalf to trusty friends. Then his nearest and dearest must be thought of, and what should he leave to them? How many thousands apiece ought an Archbishop of Canterbury to leave to his brother and sisters? It must surely depend on what he is worth. In this case he left to his brother—his hair-shirt! to his sisters, the nuns, he leaves a garment of lamb's-wool (probably the pallium sent him by the Pope), his long grey cloak, and a silver plaque engraved with sacred scenes; and his dear friend and chancellor (St. Richard, who was to be) is made residuary legatee of his drinking cup! These apparently were all the legacies he had to leave. But stay—there was something more, and more valuable than all the rest: his express forgiveness bequeathed to the enemies who had hounded him to death, with a revocation of all censures conditional only on their submission to authority.

During his last night he several times asked the hour, as if longing for some expected moment, but at dawn he cried, "In manus tuas Domine

commendo spiritum meum," then fell asleep, to wake in heaven.

May he befriend us there! us who can never forget that memorable life, that sweet character worthy of more love and reverence than we can give. Of few can it be more exactly said that he was too good for this world. His holy endeavours were the very reason of his unpopularity and persecution, and shall I say, his death? But *extinctus amabitur idem* may often be predicted of one very little worthy of remembrance. It is therefore not wonderful that no sooner was Edmund Rich gone to God than his canonisation was mooted, if indeed it was not determined by popular acclamation. Only six years later the Holy Father solemnly added his name to the catalogue of the Saints. Much more is known of his holy life than I have adverted to, from which one may with due reverence try to sketch his spiritual portrait.

His spirit then was certainly one of very true refinement—a quality which appeared not in material culture, as houses, furniture, dress, &c., which sort of refinement (had it ever been known in England then) is too often a euphemism for common selfish luxury. But it appeared in the very opposite, an exceeding simplicity of food, dress, manners, speech, habitation, what not?

Very beautiful too, and essentially high-bred was that trait in his character, of disgust even at handling money, as though it were indeed a sordid thing. What a pretty story was that of his leaving his well-earned fees on the window-sill for any

poor student who liked to help himself, or covering the money up with a shovelful of dirt and crying, dust to dust! It is not then surprising that he would never touch an honorarium for Mass.

His clear sense of truth and charity begat in him a peculiar horror of litigation, so fraught, as it was, with quibbles and lies, and productive of such monstrous injustice.

No wonder tastes and distastes so pure were accompanied by a rare delicacy of conscience. Witness the extraordinary trouble he took to find a nunnery for his sisters where no dower was demanded. Why was that? Not because they had none to give, for they had; not because his dear mother wished otherwise, for she left money for the express purpose; nor would the payment have been in any degree scandalous, for custom was strong and in many cases necessity stronger, but the canons forbade it, and that was enough for St. Edmund.

And this brings me to what I conceive was the strongest feature of his character, conspicuous as in his adherence to the canons, so in his devotion at great cost to the divine office, in his great generosity to churches, especially to Salisbury, both in the building and the maintenance of its glorious service, in his unyielding vindication of his archiepiscopal rights, and, at a time when all men were murmuring at the large demands of the Holy See, in his readiness to submit to every exaction rather than be at variance with the Vicar of Christ. In all these respects what moved him was surely the true ecclesiastical spirit,

and that in an intense degree. More endearing, no doubt, was his spirit of the true pastor, that mingling of the natural and supernatural sympathies, which went out from the heart of England's primate to the greatest interests of the land and the welfare of her patriots down to the petty but pitiable concerns of the poor.

Above all in him was that faithful correspondence with grace in such degree that the love of Christ was raised to the power of a passion, ardent, constant, subordinating all other interests, a fire which consumed his youth and corporal strength and purified his soul of all alloy. Well might the contemporary chroniclers write of him that he was "dear to God and man," that he was "most blessed," "from virtue to virtue ever rising higher," "to whom the favour of God and man was pledged," "rich in every kind of excellence."

However *St. Edmund* may be read, there is none too high, none too humble for his example, not one, not one. If the docility and diligence of the child may be imitated at St. Hugh's, the sufferings and merits, the patience and firmness of the noble archbishop will evermore be the encouragement of the chief pastor in this land. But obviously the greater part of his life is the model to the greater number of us, the rank and file of the clergy. The ecclesiastical student indeed, and the professor, the rector and assistant and canon have alike a pattern on which to form an ideal each for himself, not the same ideal indeed, nor yet anything merely imaginary, but a possible ideal. And as to the

student in particular (and in some respects the most important of all) I cannot refrain from one word—the student, I mean, who knows the common peril of flesh and blood. In our patron's self-espousal to Mary, let him see not merely the poetry but the wisdom of the act, and let him in some equivalent way pledge himself to her, with the same decisiveness, or else—let the affair alone for ever. If after a reasonable time he cannot feel such decision, he has a doubtful vocation, and a doubtful vocation in my judgment is no vocation, but a snare of the devil.

And we, reverend fathers and dear brethren, who glory in our irrevocable course, what are we to think of this model of many virtues? Well, if we cannot feel "the igniting touch of passion which makes the saint," at least we may cultivate the ecclesiastical spirit. It is not a great, unreasonable ambition, though it is most important, it is within the reach of all, rather it is ours of course; nay, is it not a *sine qua non* to save our souls or at least our honour? Eheu! patres reverendi, delectissimi fratres nonne defectu ejus ipsius virtutis tot nostrorum lapsi sunt? Nonne fieri potest ut et nos, nisi eam foverimus, in eodem periculo versemur? Animus autem ecclesiasticus, ni fallor, nihil aliud est quam, ut ita dicam, sacerdotis religio sæcularis, cui clerus est ordini, ipse Papa abbati, cujus regula præceptis et monitis ecclesiæ continetur. Quæ religio nec minus obligat, nec minus adjuvat quam religio religiosorum, nec minus efficit ad salutem. Suadet enim, nostro prælucente Edmundo, naturam refrænare, *i.e.* carnem

et sanguinem atque mentem sive abstinentia, sive jejunio sive disciplina, convivia temperare, lucrum contemnere, neque "rem rem quocunque modo rem" semper quærere. Contra vero hæc gratia Dei levat officium divinum et omnia onera vitæ ecclesiasticæ, immo dulcia reddit, cærimonias in deliciis habet. Quid plura? Suadet zelum domus Dei.

Tali Sancti Edmundi animo imbuti clientes cum patrono coronemur!

SOME POINTS OF CONTRAST AND LIKENESS

THE SERMON PREACHED ON ST. EDMUND'S DAY, 1900,

BY VERY REV. O. R. VASSALL-PHILLIPS, C.S.S.R.

“Remember your prelates who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ, yesterday and to-day and the same for ever.”
—HEB. xiii. 7, 8.

WHEN our minds go back to the days of St. Edmund, how different it all seems to be. At first, it appears as though another world was opening before our eyes. The feudal system still lingered at the commencement of the thirteenth century. It was actually the epoch of the Crusades. We know, of course, that the preaching of the sixth crusade was one of the great events in St. Edmund's life. The spirit of the crusades has, alas, passed away for ever!

Again, the monarch in those days was well-nigh absolute—such checks as there were upon his arbitrary power were extra-constitutional; or rather, constitution in our sense there was none. The laws of good King Edward had been long over-ridden by foreign Norman customs. The parliamentary system of our days had not yet been dreamed of. There were, indeed, the great nobles who were summoned

to a Parliament from time to time at the king's good pleasure, or when his need for extraordinary subsidies became imperative. They arrogantly called themselves (for example in a written document sent by one of their number to Ireland), "illi, quorum consilio rex et regnum regitur"; but the House of Commons did not as yet exist even in germ.

Education, such as it was, was practically confined to the clergy; often great barons could not sign their names, and even among the clergy I fear that many would hardly come up to our modern standards or requirements. How strange, for example, it sounds to us to read that when Ralph de Nevile, Bishop of Chichester, was elected by the monks of Canterbury to be their archbishop, objection was made to the Pope, on his causing inquiries to be made, concerning the prelate as to what manner of man he was, that he—who was already a bishop—was *illiterate*.

If we turn to Oxford, how different is the picture that meets our gaze!—a difference that is to be found not merely in the buildings, but also in the whole *ethos* of the place, and the mental attitude of its inhabitants. Modern culture was a thing unknown. No weary questionings vexed men's souls. It was not even as yet the age of the scholastics. St. Edmund lived before the Master of the Sentences had begun to write or lecture.

When men hung on St. Edmund's lips, as he discoursed on knowledge, sacred or profane, they drank in all that he taught without so much as a doubt disturbing the even surface of their in-

tellectual being. They were all so magnificently simple; we, alas! are for the most part so distressingly complex in our imaginings. And as it was in the intellectual, so was it in the moral and social order. Industrial centres did not so much as exist. There was no ever-recurring conflict between the forces of capital and labour. Trade disputes were unknown. Men were not divided into individualistic and collectivist camps in economics. Every one understood the dignity of the individual, and also the sacredness of the family. All those terrible questions that arise from the increase of the population, the conflict between the laws of supply and demand and the like, were unknown. Pauperism with its hideous concomitants had not yet reared its ghastly head. The Church of God discharged most of the functions of the State. She taught both the rights of property and its duties. She enforced the dignity of labour and the sacredness of voluntary poverty. She provided for the poor of Jesus Christ, so that when the peers, spiritual and temporal of England, wrung from a reluctant monarch the great charter of our liberties, John Lackland knew that by the solemn words, "*Ecclesia Anglicana sit libera,*" there was indeed secured to the Church that which she needed for her supernatural life; but moreover that thus through the Church and through the Church alone, would the liberties of God's people be safeguarded along the ages that were to come.

Ours is unfortunately pre-eminently a rationalistic and materialistic age. St. Edmund lived in the

very atmosphere of the supernatural. Miracles seemed to be the air which he breathed, and to cast their fragrance all around. It seemed perfectly natural to the good folk of his day (so closely were the natural and the supernatural then woven into one harmonious whole) that the Child Jesus should appear to the boy Edmund and hold sweet colloquy with him on the way; or if they marvelled, it was only with a wonderment that made them raise their hearts in thanksgiving to God, when they were told that he had placed the ring of espousal on the finger of Our Lady, and that the ring had by God's great power remained there immovable. Or, to take another instance, when his friend was ill and St. Edmund sent her the relic of St. Thomas, they only asked themselves: Was the cure due to the relic of the Saint who lived before God above, or to the prayers of the Saint who still walked before God on earth? and they concluded wisely that our Lord had listened both to the merits of the blissful martyr in heaven and to the prayers of his dear servant here below.

When we read such things, we know that we are in the very ages of faith—and yet there was another side to the picture. The faith indeed was there in its strength and beauty. We love to think of the rough baron just converted to God by St. Edmund, who made his great act of faith upon his knees before receiving the most holy Body of our Lord, as provision for his last journey; but we cannot forget that that same baron, like many of his order, had led a life of lawlessness, cruelty,

and rapine such as could never be lived now. It was an age of great virtues, but also of great vices; an age most strangely unlike our own. So strangely unlike that at first sight it seems quite different. Yet, as we look more closely, the differences seem after all to lie very much upon the surface of things, and to be accidental, differences of time, of scientific discoveries and of environment, rather than those which touch the essence of things.

Printing had not yet been invented, and there was no railway and no telegraph, no daily paper and no penny post. We can hardly imagine how men then lived their lives. Yet those lives they did live, and in all essential things they lived them much as we live ours to-day. For through all the differences there were three great realities which still remain, which were the motive power of St. Edmund's life, and which, if we will let them, may rule and sway our lives, as they ruled and swayed his. And these realities—these facts, were: first, the existence of the Sacred Humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and secondly, the existence of His Church; and thirdly, the existence of England as an entity composed of living men and women.

Love of God Incarnate, of the Church of God, and of his country, was the inspiration of St. Edmund's life, as it may be the inspiration of your life and of mine. "Remember your prelates who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ, yesterday, to-day, and the same for

ever." Yes; He is the corner-stone of the arch that binds the centuries in one: "Jesus Christ yesterday and to-day and the same for ever." Amidst all the changes of this changeful life there is one who changeth not.

Friends of boyhood must drop one by one from our side; the friends of middle life can hardly be those of extreme old age, but the God of our childhood will be with us still even though the hair be white upon our head. Yes, in His great mercy He will be with us even to the end, even as in all the difficulties of life, He only can be our stay. Our one hope, we learn it more and more, is to cling to Him. As we watch St. Edmund, we see that he lived for our Lord only and for our Lord always. It seemed to him a very small thing to be judged by man's judgment, if only he might please God. "Then stretching forth his right hand towards the sacred Body of our Lord, he spake unto It with great boldness, and said, 'Thou, Lord, art He in whom I have believed, whom I have proclaimed, whom I have truly taught, and Thou art my witness that while on earth I have sought nothing but thee. As also Thou knowest that I will nothing but what Thou willest, Lord. And so, Thy will be done, for in Thy will is my will.'"

Thus in the trials of St. Edmund's life, whether journeying penniless to Paris, or teaching at Oxford, or engaged in missionary labours up and down the country, or as treasurer of the Church of Salisbury, or amidst all the difficulties and troubles of the charge of a country parish, or in the dread

responsibilities of the primatial see, we find always that his one thought was to please our Lord, to keep himself united to Him and to draw others to the love of God.

For this end was he so particular even from childhood to hear Mass daily; for this cause did he become a priest; for this was he so assiduous in hearing confessions; for this purpose was he so tenderly devout to our Blessed Lady, that day by day he might grow in the knowledge and love of her Divine Son.

And we too, dear brethren, shall find it impossible to do our duties or live our lives as they should be lived, unless we too daily keep before our minds the figure of the Son of God, who for us became the Son of Man.

Heaven often looks so far away from earth; the darkness round about us is almost as though it could be felt; the "body of this death" a weight greater than can be borne. The fell temptation comes that it is impossible for us, who know ourselves to be what we are, to be one day with the Saints of God, with David the Royal Psalmist, and Isaias the Evangelical Prophet, and Daniel the Man of Desires; with the great forerunner of our Lord and the disciple whom Jesus loved, and Peter Prince of the Apostles; with St. Joseph the reputed father of the Everlasting Word; with the Queen in her beauty; aye, and with God Himself, before whom the angels cast their crowns for all eternity.

"Wretched man that I am," we cry aloud, "who shall deliver me," and the answer comes,

given of old by the blessed Paul, "The grace of God by Christ Jesus our Lord." The grace of God shall be sufficient for us, as for the Apostle of the Gentiles, if only like Him, through evil report as through good report, with St. Edmund and with all the friends of God we cling to Jesus Christ our Master.

Sometimes our intellectual moorings may seem cut adrift, sometimes even the very foundations of morality may seem about to slip entirely from our grasp; then alone are we safe, above all in moments such as these, if we can cry out with Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou and Thou alone hast the words of Everlasting Life." Then alone are we safe if, with St. Edmund, we hold Him fast and will not let Him go, and cling to the one reality amidst the shades and shadows of all the unrealities. The love of God, made man for love of us. We have known and we have believed in the love of God, for God is love.

Nothing will really help us in the end, unless we have a personal devotion to our Blessed Lord's sacred humanity.

On the other hand, if we live in daily communing with Him nothing can really harm us. We cannot then distrust Him.

Scio cui credidi.

And as this is true of the private personal life of each one of us, so is it also true of our public life, and of any public difficulties which we may encounter. For us, as for St. Edmund, the one thing that can sustain us is Faith in the Church.

Never let us separate, even in thought, that which God has joined together so indissolubly, the Body and the Head, the Spouse and the Bride, our Lord and His holy Church.

Across the ages we can stretch our hands to St. Edmund, as we know that here we meet and are one. All differences vanish in the unity of God's holy Church. The same Sacrifice is pleaded now for living and for dead as was pleaded then; the same seven mighty Sacraments administered; the same great Mother of God worshipped; the same truth taught; the same hopes cheer us on our way.

As we read the life of St. Edmund, we see that loyalty to the Church and to the good of the Church was the passion of his life, and we know that from his seat in heaven he will feel for us, in our love of the Church and in the desire of our hearts to spread the faith on English soil.

Yes, on English soil. No man was more English than was our dear St. Edmund, bred in an English home, with that most precious of all possessions, a loving English mother; brought up in the great English university. It is true that he went for a short while to France, but it was only to return to England, and it is characteristic of him that though he preached the crusade so zealously, he never took the cross himself, as did other prelates of the day. He knew that England was to be his Holy Land. Here on English soil he spent himself for English men and English women; and when, at last, driven by the intrigues, chiefly of

foreigners, he had to go and die in exile, "because he had loved justice and hated iniquity," most pathetic was his parting to the soil that he loved so well, most touching the blessing he gave to London from the eminence outside, and to the whole realm, whilst the cliffs of Dover were slowly receding from his view. As St. Paul was not ashamed to call himself a Pharisee of the Pharisees, and declared that he would even be anathema for his brethren according to the flesh—so assuredly would our St. Edmund not have feared to call himself that which in truth he was, English of the English.

So we see that, after all, our work is not to be so unlike unto his, notwithstanding all the differences of the long centuries. We, like him, have to work for England, and we, like him, can only do this effectively by nourishing within our hearts a most tender devotion to the Sacred Humanity of our Lord, and a most loyal and thorough consecration of ourselves to the holy Church of God. May St. Edmund from his throne in heaven smile down upon us and strengthen our weak hands that they fail not, and warm our cold hearts that they do not faint! May he pray for us that in our measure and degree we may do that work which God has appointed unto us to do for this our day and generation, so that when our race is run, like him we may have done something, notwithstanding our unworthiness, for God, for the Church, for England, so that with him we may rejoice for ever.

We began with differences, we end with the likeness, and the likeness is greater than the differ-

ence, for all things earthly pass away, but Jesus Christ abideth always. He was the joy, the brightness of St. Edmund's life, and that which He was to St. Edmund He will be to us, if strengthened by Edmund's prevailing merits and by his glorious intercession we strive, at least at a great distance, to walk in his dear footsteps.

“Remember your prelates who have spoken the Word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ, yesterday and to-day and the same for ever.”

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ST. EDMUND

THE SERMON PREACHED ON ST. EDMUND'S DAY, 1902,

BY REV. MAURICE WATSON, O.P.

“He that soweth in blessings, blessings also shall he reap.”—
2 COR. ix. 6.

SINCE the great archbishop whose feast we are keeping walked the earth a burning and a shining light to all around him, seven hundred years have passed away. How much has our country changed since then! How different is the England we know from the England of St. Edmund's time! Whether we look at its political side, its social or religious life, what a distance separates us from the England of his day! The face of the country is altered, the language has changed, dress, manners, and customs all have been transformed; mediæval England has gone, disappeared as completely as the snows of a former winter never to return, and we do not look back to those times for our models and ideals in any part of life but *one*. The type of Christian saintliness—*that* remains—is the same in all ages. The Saint, the true follower of that Divine Master, who is “the same yesterday, to-day and for ever,” must live the same life now, practise

the same virtues, bear the same cross, and fight the same good fight of faith as was waged by St. Edmund seven centuries ago. The Christian ideal has not changed, so that year after year we are able to come together and, calling to mind the career and virtue of such a man as St. Edmund, keep festival in his honour, and hold up his life before us as something to imitate as well as to reverence and admire.

I have spoken of St. Edmund as a great archbishop. Can we call one great who seems to have accomplished so little during his episcopate, who appears rather to have failed in his public undertakings, who in the midst of the struggle seems not so much to have overcome as to have withdrawn from the fight? Did we judge him by the standard of the world, we should not venture to call him great, but we measure him by another rule. As a disciple of Him who came unto His own, and His own received Him not, of Him who though He spoke and wrought as never man had done before, yet lived despised and rejected of men, who ended His life on a cross and was to human eyes the greatest of all failures. We look at St. Edmund as we know God regarded him, that God who judges and rewards not by success in the esteem of men, but by the noble efforts made through love of Him on His behalf, who sets the soul a task and watches with joy and favour the struggle to fulfil that task in the face of trial and contradiction. If for nothing else St. Edmund was a great archbishop, because amid unwonted tempta-

tion he kept the narrow path of sanctity himself, and held aloft the light of Christian principle for others. He is great in the kingdom of heaven because he toiled, prayed, and suffered in constancy and patience, that the teaching of his Divine Master might prevail.

“My elect shall not labour in vain” (Is. lxx. 23) said the Holy Spirit. And I will not leave you to suppose that the short years of St. Edmund’s episcopate were without fruit even in his own time. We may not forget his influence over the king when he was permitted to bring it to bear, or his power over sinners and the conversions he made, or his wonderful success as a mediator between bitter enemies and unscrupulous rivals. Are not these things signs of a real power and a true greatness? Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called by the great title of sons of God.

St. Edmund was ever a peacemaker, and the success of the early years of his episcopal life bears witness to a wonderful influence which could come only from the greatness of a perfect soul. When men are worked into a tumult of angry passion, what a marvellous force it requires to calm their agitation and bring peace where all was storm! Yet this is what St. Edmund did. Have we not seen before now a black cloud overspread some part of the heavens shutting out the light of day—a dark and threatening cloud which seems about to burst upon us in storm and rain—yet as we look in suspense upon it awaiting the dreaded outbreak, slowly and quietly, we know not how, the sun pierces

the dark mass, shines through and gradually disperses the clouds, some to the east and some to the west across the sky, clouds no longer black and threatening but each one tinged with some of the sun's own golden splendour, lit up and made beautiful by the brightness they have caught from its rays. So did the angry gatherings of rival nobles and rough barons melt under the influence of our Saint. Filled with passion they came, breathing indignation, anger, and violence. Yet the kind word, the Christian love, the sweet reasonableness of St. Edmund subdued them, and they went away no longer wrathful, menacing, and vindictive, but each one tinged with something of the Saint's own spirit, touched with some reflection of the gentle, peaceful, mild, and forgiving nature they had caught from him. All this and more, I say, we find in St. Edmund's life.

He was great too, not only in his influence as a counsellor and peacemaker, great in his aims, in his efforts for country and for Church. He had the views of a great statesman, but was not permitted to carry them out. He would have been a great reformer in the Church, but was forbidden to execute his reforms. He was great in his personal sanctity, great in his patriotism, great in his loyalty to Rome when that loyalty was not so easy as it is now, great in his championship of right, and in his childlike submission to authority when his decisions were overruled and his work undone. No trouble, no contradiction, no betrayal ever made him lose his trust in God, his faith in what was

good or caused him to swerve one step in the holiness of his life and the path of duty, and when after six years of conflict and humiliation he left his country and took refuge in a foreign abbey, it was not because he renounced his high aims, his self-devotion, and his zeal for good, but because a higher authority than his own rendered his efforts sterile and his labour without fruit. I am right therefore in calling St. Edmund a great archbishop. No wonder he was looked upon as a Saint, no wonder even his enemies were compelled when the heat of passion had subsided to acknowledge his holiness; no wonder that God worked miracles at his tomb, and so set the zeal of His approval upon St. Edmund's life in the way which the faithful of that age could best understand.

But what I wish you particularly to notice is this, that the virtues of our great Saint did not come upon him at his consecration, nor did he grow holy, saintly, a lover of God, a peacemaker, or a model bishop during the six years he held the primacy of Canterbury. No; he had made ready his soul in the long years before. The secret of his saintly life as bishop was the earnest unremitting preparation of his earlier years. Patience, obedience, zeal, humility, unwearied thankless labour, and ungrudging submission came no more naturally to St. Edmund than to us. But years of generous effort, of prayer, of obedience to grace, of self-discipline had gradually made the practice of a holy life a second nature to him. He had sown in blessings and blessings he did not fail to reap.

Such, I think, is the inestimable advantage of having St. Edmund as patron of a College like this. We can study his life, about which such ample accounts have come down to us that we can almost watch every step of his path to sanctity. We can, if I may use the expression, see how it was done. Enough is known of his whole career to enable us to trace the way by which Edmund Rich became a Saint. And there seems nothing in his early life, his circumstances or surroundings which lifts him into a higher sphere than our own. He stands on the same level with ourselves. He began life as we began it. Many Saints I know seem to have been born perfect, and the supernaturally wonderful overshadows them from the cradle to the grave. But with St. Edmund it was not so. He was not an angel by birth, but a boy like any other boy, with the human passions and weaknesses that we have, inclined to do what we feel drawn to, and like ourselves, he required to be corrected and guided by others. We read that at one period of his youth, he preferred playing to hearing Mass, at another that his personal appearance was a matter of concern to him, and I have no doubt that had his biographers so chosen, they might have left us many another detail to show us how complete was the likeness between the young Edmund and the Catholic youth of to-day. In short, he was altogether a real human child, and he became a real living Saint, and what we may and should do is to find the secret of his success and step hopefully forward on the same royal road to heaven. That secret of his

success is no secret at all, it is written plainly enough for all to read. It was this : He set himself a high ideal, to be a Saint, to be perfect in every stage and position of his life ; he threw his heart into all he did, never lost sight of the ideal he had put before him, and whatever his right hand found to do, he did it with his might.

As a student he had ever before him the ideal of what one in his place should be, and strove in all the earnestness of his soul to act up to it. He had in his mind the image and example of the perfect student, and set himself to be like his pattern, regular, industrious, eager to learn, willing to be taught, and to submit to discipline ; faithful in his religious duties and steadfast in controlling his natural inclinations, patient and persevering, doing the work well that day by day lay before him, and then as the Oxford letter says of him in words we should remember, " When he became a young man, he walked of his own accord in the way in which he had been previously led."

As a lecturer and teacher it was the same. God and his work absorbed him. Did I not think that the story of St. Edmund's life is well known to you all, we might speak of him as lecturer at Oxford, as treasurer and chief sacristan at Salisbury, and see how in those periods of his life there was no falling away from the high standard of duty he had always followed, but ever the same piety, zeal, industry, and self-devotion that carried him at length to the ranks of the Church's heroes.

This earnestness, this acting up to a high ideal, seems the chief lesson of St. Edmund's life for you, my dear young friends. For I am of course addressing myself particularly to you. You are the real St. Edmund's—the building of brick and stone, the lofty chapel, the carved altar, and the painted window and decorated hall, these things, beautiful as they are, are but the mere shell, the naked framework, the material body of St. Edmund's College; you are its quickening soul, the breath of life which animates it and makes it a living, acting institution, and St. Edmund's is not what architects, what masons, and the hand of the artist has made it, but what you make it, you and those who have gone before you, and those who in future years shall be where you are now. To you then I say, put this feature of St. Edmund's life unceasingly before you in this one thing at least, be like your holy patron, have the right idea of what the perfect student should be and try to live up to it. We must not live here praying and working without an aim, just to pass our time, and longing to be released from the restraints of school life and discipline, but we must live and work for a purpose.

Can you imagine St. Edmund living all his life through with this thought uppermost in his mind, this feeling predominating and influencing all he did: How can I best succeed in making life most agreeable, easy, and advantageous to myself. In what way can I best advance my own interests with least trouble and risk to myself?

One instant of reflection will tell us that had this been his aim, he would never have been a Saint; we should have had no St. Edmund's College, and kept no feast of him to-day. His principle was: How can I make best use of the gifts of nature and grace God has given me for His service, and that is the question we must live by, all of us, not the clergy or only those who aspire to the clerical state, but every one. We need not hide from ourselves the fact that there are many failures, even the best schools, the most wisely conducted Catholic Colleges have to deplore many disappointments amongst their children, many whose after-life belied the promise; and if by chance we meet one of these failures and listen to his own story, you will hear from his lips again and again such words as these, "ill-luck, misfortune, victim of circumstances." But the real cause of their non-success is usually something they do not suspect, they never had any ideal, they never aimed at anything good or high, they never sought to fashion and mould themselves according to a definite model—present convenience and not future usefulness was their object—they never had the right conception of what they should be. Instead of steering their proper course they drifted, and those who let themselves drift at College will drift in after life, and drifters will sooner or later strike the rocks. They sowed no blessings; they reaped what they had sown. We are not victims of circumstances, we are what we make ourselves. God has fitted our circumstances to our nature and His grace to both; it is

our fault if we fail to be the pattern Catholics, each in our state and calling.

Not for nothing did God call us here and give us St. Edmund for our patron and example, but that me might keep his life before us and walk faithfully in his steps. And therefore I say to you: Look unto the rock from which you were hewn and the pit from which you were digged, look at the spirit of him who is your father and patron now in this quiet sowing-time of your lives. Like him sow in blessings that blessings hereafter you may reap; like him do the task well, that day by day lies before you, knowing that an enthusiastic devotion to work is of itself one of the best defences against the temptation to a wicked or disorderly life. Like him throw your heart into all that you do, but above everything into the work of your salvation. Like him, with God's grace learn discipline, self-restraint, and self-control, convinced that your noblest liberty and greatest glory is to do what you ought, not what you like; so make ready now, that when the time comes for you to leave these sheltering walls you may, like him, walk of your own accord in the way in which you have been previously led. You all love St. Edmund,—who could help it? You all desire to be an honour to him, to make him everywhere known and loved. Try to be something like him, and his name shall be known and exalted, and his memory never fade. It shall be said in the words of Holy Writ, "His father is dead, and is as if he were not dead; for he hath left behind him sons like unto himself" (Ecclus. xxx. 4).

SERMON AT THE BURIAL OF
REV. ROBERT BUTLER, D.D.

PREACHED BY THE RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR WARD,
ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1902.*

“Credo videre bona Domini in terra viventium, expecta Dominum, viriliter age, et confortetur cor tuum et sustine Dominum.”

“I believe that I shall see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living; wait for the Lord, acting manfully, and let thy heart take courage, and wait thou for the Lord.”—Ps. xxvi.

WE are here to-day in the presence of the mortal remains of a saint such as this generation of English Catholics has not known. *Non est inventus similis illi qui conservaret legem Excelsi.*

And I am called upon to speak to you of his virtues, of his work, of that life which he has just finished, and which he has offered to God at His judgment-seat.

* Rev. Robert Butler, D.D., of the Oblates of St. Charles, whose remains were laid to rest on the north side of the Lady's Altar on November 6, 1902, was born in 1836, and studied at St. Edmund's from 1850-58. He held the office of Sacristan at the opening of the church in 1853. Having been ordained priest at Rome in 1860, he joined the Congregation of the Oblates of St. Charles, and was the life-long friend of Cardinal Manning. He was Rector of St. Charles's College, Bayswater, from 1878 till his death on All Saints Day, 1902.

What can I say to you? Are there not those here who should rather tell me? Are there not those connected with him by blood-relationship who have known him in the intimacy of home? Are there not those of his own community, who have had unbroken intercourse with him for years, and been eye-witnesses of his daily actions, and seen how fully, how completely, his oblation of himself—which is the characteristic of his Congregation—was reflected in his whole life? Are there not students and masters of the College, which he governed for well-nigh a quarter of a century, who have known and felt the influence of his paternal rule and the efficacy of his prayers?

Surely you have far more to tell me than I can have to tell you. And if I presume to speak at all, it is because I see before me a generation of Edmundians, to whom he is comparatively unknown. How strange this seems, when we think of his long connection with us, spreading well over half a century, his continual and warm interest in everything connected with us, his tender and life-long devotion to our own St. Edmund, the way in which he cherished the memory of his days here, and his continual recollection of what he owed to his education in this house!

Yet it cannot be said that he is entirely unknown to us. We have heard him speak to us of the things of God at conferences, at retreats, in sermons; and many of us have knelt at his feet in the sacred Tribunal of Penance. We have been as Lazarus desiring to be filled with the crumbs that fell from

the rich man's table. But that is all, and at the end of his life it is necessary to speak even to Edmundians, to tell them of their father and friend, so long and so fondly attached to them, who was himself of all the most Edmundian, in the truest and highest sense of the word.

As for myself, since I first knew him in the early days of his priesthood, I have never spent a day without thinking of him, never had to face any trial or difficulty, such as by God's Providence we have to face in this world, without knowing that there was a man of God to whom to appeal, ever ready to give his whole mind and his whole sympathy. I never had any hopes for our work or our future here without feeling that there would be one who would hear of such hopes and help us with his words and his prayers. It is a small thing to say that his loss is to me irreparable; for the loss is shared by thousands of others. The scene at the church yesterday spoke eloquently of his friends, clerical and lay, and his penitents, who came to perform the last sad rites, and many of whom felt that they were spiritual orphans. To be allowed to speak to you for a few moments of such a life, and of some of the little traits of it as apparent to those who knew him, is a privilege.

The one thought which I would put before you is that which has always appeared to me the keynote of his life, the true and real joy, the unintermittent joy of the service of God. "We make our own sorrows by our want of faith," he would say. "God sends us trials, yes; sufferings, yes. Ought

we not to rejoice when He does so? Are they not the very means of our sanctification? But throughout all our life it is God's will that there shall be a continual current of joy—that there should not be even one moment of real sorrow. Confidence in God is what we want. The virtue of hope should be the mainstay of our life, our support in our troubles." *Quare contristatus incedo dum affligit me inimicus?*—"Why am I troubled by the oppression of the enemy?" And the Psalmist answers, *Spera in Deo*—"Hope in God, and I will yet give praise to Him, the salvation of my countenance."

"Our clergy do not preach hope enough," he would say. "Many lose their eternal salvation through want of hope. We can never be too constant in proclaiming the mercy of God and the constancy of His help to poor fallen mankind." It is a beautiful thought when we think of the joy of the good even in this world—a joy different in kind from that of the world, and one which they neither understand nor believe; a joy which takes pleasure in self-sacrifice and work for God, so that our Lord could say, "Amen, I say to you, there is no man who hath left house or brethren or lands for My sake and the Gospel who shall not receive an hundred times as much *now in this time*; houses, brethren, and lands, *with persecutions*; and in the world to come life everlasting" (St. Mark x. 30). Such surely is the promise fulfilled very perfectly in him whose loss we mourn to-day. Let us think for a little on his life from

this point of view as one of perpetual joy in the Holy Ghost.

His first joy was his own home—the picture of a Catholic home, where he first learnt to know his God, and where he was taught his earliest lessons in that true Catholic piety on which his whole life was based.

Irish he was by descent, Irish by sympathy, not as a party man or a politician—for politics as such had no place in his life—but as one who was full of tender sympathy for the poverty and sufferings of the Irish people, as one who realised that he owed all he had in this world—his faith—to the constancy and faith of the Irish people, who stood the test of persecution, and were found faithful when we in England failed. His mother I can scarcely remember; his brothers were united to him through life, one as a priest, three as laymen in the world. All save one have already gone to their rest, assisted by his prayers and ministrations. And one of his two sisters survives him.

He never spoke of his relations, for he had given himself to the ministry, and had gone forth as one without home or friends to fulfil the evangelical counsels in all their fulness. Detachment was complete; yet not the detachment of one who suppressed his human feelings, but of one who raised and sanctified them. He would often quote the great Jesuit saint who would make his daily offering to God: "I offer my brethren in religion with one hand and my relations with the other, before the throne of God." They were indeed con-

stantly in his thoughts and were to him more—much more—than to many who show it more. Yet externally there was the perfect detachment necessary for the work of his life.

The next great joy of his life was his vocation to the priesthood. After a year or two at the ancient English school at Sedgley Park, where so many of our Catholic ancestors of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were educated, in the year 1850 he came to this College.

And here we come to the period of his life which interests us chiefly as Edmundians. Those were stirring times, both materially and intellectually. This Church in which we are assembled was approaching completion, and its opening was looked forward to with unusual interest. The Gothic revival was at its height, and much was hoped for from the restoration of Ritual, which the new edifice then being rapidly erected would render possible. This chapel has ever stood out as one of Pugin's greatest works; and its opening, long delayed, took place at last just upon fifty years ago. Robert Butler was sacristan at the time, and he has often described to me the devotion which the early days of the new chapel inspired, and his joy at the sight of the ritual of the Church carried out in a manner to which England had so long been a stranger.

And here, in those days, it was that emerging from boyhood into manhood, he learned that beautiful simplicity of piety, that continual sense of the presence of God which lasted throughout his life.

Let us hear his own words spoken of him from whom he learnt it.

When, some years ago, we were assembled on this very spot to perform the last funeral rites for our own Dr. Weathers, it was he who spoke to us about him thus: "Week by week," he said, "we heard that gentle voice inviting us to read chosen chapters in the *Imitation of Christ*, which would train a boy in the true deep principles of the life of the Sanctuary. Then we grew into familiarity with the unaffected preaching of his daily example. Let me recall his early unvarying preparation for the Holy Sacrifice, and afterwards as he was leaving this chapel, to go to his daily routine, the glow on his modest countenance which seemed the reflex of the smile of his Lord with whom he had been communing; then how jealous he was of his voluntary poverty, and how industrious in his ways of maintaining self-contempt—there was a great secret there. His silent and stern self-conquest showed the manliness of a man of God. As he lies in your midst he will speak and speak on if you will let him, of all that that example meant. And he is one of the most imitable of the great servants of God whose memory we hold dear."

My dear brethren, who can read these words in which he describes the master from whom he learnt his love of God, without seeing how he has unconsciously described *himself*? How well he learnt his lesson from the unworldly and holy President of those days, whose tomb is one of the glories of our Church? And if it were not presumption

to add a second name, I would even quote the name of my own father, who had at least some little share in the formation of these virtues and their development. So at least he has often told me. And there were others here at the same time who by their unworldly life, characteristic of the spirit of St. Edmund, helped in the work of his sanctification.

But the atmosphere of the time did not breathe unmitigated peace. There were other developments besides external ones in the College. The general revival of activity which followed the restoration of the hierarchy was making itself felt. Churches were multiplying, and religious orders, to which England had long been a stranger, were reappearing in numbers. Noted Protestants were converted, many of whom showed their earnestness by surrendering all their earthly prospects for the sake of the grace of faith. Great hopes were entertained of the future, and many by the grace of God formed resolutions to devote themselves to special works in England. It was not to be expected that this would pass off without opposition, and in fact this College was the centre of much party strife. The battle is now long over and forgotten, and it is possible to allude to events without fear of reviving the strife. Cardinal Wiseman had visions of great works for God, much of which he accomplished. One of these was involved in the founding of the Congregation of Oblates of St. Charles, who should devote themselves to helping the bishop in whatever work he might have at heart. Father

Butler saw here his vocation to surrender himself more completely to the work of grace; he was one of the first to join the order, one of the six whom St. Edmund's gave to St. Charles. Father Herbert Vaughan, now our Cardinal Archbishop, was another: he came to Old Hall as Vice-President in 1855. But no work for God will prosper unless it is signed with the sign of the cross, and it is well known how much the infant congregation had to face. It had been at first proposed that the government of the College should be entrusted to them; but after a long and wearisome discussion they withdrew, and devoted themselves to other work. During this time party feeling had shown itself with some vehemence and persistence. It is characteristic of him of whom I speak that this never overclouded the even tenor of his life; and that although his own sympathies were committed to the side of his fellow-oblates, his friendships with all remained as warm as ever. He has ever since been an enthusiastic Edmundian, and has rarely missed our feast-day with us; and to-day we are allowed to claim him as our own. To have educated a saint is no small blessing to a house such as this, and to stand, as we do this moment, close to his mortal remains, which will one day be reunited to his soul in heaven before the throne of God, is no small privilege.

And now we come to the third and greatest of the joys of his life—his priesthood. Called to Rome to finish his course, he had the privilege of beginning his priestly career before the tombs of

the Apostles, in the city sanctified by the blood of martyrs and the sufferings and prayers of confessors for Christ. And as he began his priestly life at the fountain-head of all Christianity, so his conception of it was entirely Christian. There was never any inclination to shut his eyes to the strength of sin, or to fail to meet the facts of life. He at once became like the Good Shepherd who seeks the lost sheep, and when He finds it brings it back on His own shoulders and celebrates the triumph as His own. The pharisaical horror of sinners had no place in him, and if sometimes those whom he had helped were ungrateful, that seemed to give them only the greater claim on his energies and his time. Who shall tell of the work he did during his fifteen years and more of missionary labour at St. Mary of the Angels, and, for a short time, also at Westminster? Who shall tell the joys of his life in seeing the good which he had so long looked forward to doing now abounding within his grasp? Who can count the number of sinners comforted, strengthened, and rescued from their sins? All this was joy to him, a joy which was measured by the work and the self-sacrifice it cost him.

For a short time he was Superior, but the work was never congenial to him, for one of the most marked features of his character was his self-effacement. He was more happy when helping others than when ruling them. Humility is the motto of the Congregation; and humility shone in every action of his life. Not a word about himself, not

a word about his own work, but all his powers poured forth on the work of others who came to consult him. And this self-effacement it was, combined with his holiness of life and his long experience, that gave him that large-mindedness and breadth of view which was the work of grace. He was welcomed by converts and by old Catholics alike. In those days when the stream of conversions was a novelty, those who had been so long estranged from the Church were but imperfectly understood; even as they themselves partially failed to appreciate the less demonstrative English piety, forced as it had been by long persecution to keep itself below the surface. It speaks no little for his breadth of sympathy to find him equally the friend—the intimate friend—of both, sought after by both, the adviser of all. Was not this one of the joys of his priesthood?

Monsignor Manning, then his superior in the Congregation, from the first knew and appreciated the sanctity of the youthful priest, and then began a period of thirty years of the closest intimacy. When afterwards archbishop and cardinal, he ever relied on his advice, so that few people have had more real influence than he on the course of events; and this influence he used with such a sense of responsibility that seldom, if ever, was any one found to take his position amiss.

There have been those who failed to understand him, who have spoken of him lightly and even uncharitably—so far as he was concerned, we thank God for it. He would not have been the saint he

was had he not had a share in the ingratitude of the world. Cardinal Manning has said that a priest who is seldom seen in society is the one whom men most desire to have beside them when they die. I have known those who would fain say that our friend was not an agreeable companion, that his ascetic appearance made him unwelcome or the like. Men have said this—justly or unjustly. But I never knew any man say that he would not wish to be assisted by him on his death-bed, or that he would not consider it the greatest privilege that could be granted to him on such an occasion. And how many he thus assisted, how often he was able at that last hour to comfort and console and strengthen, will not be known till all things are made manifest at the last.

I should like to say more of his joys as a priest, of his work among religious in giving retreats and in preaching, but time forbids. I would ask your indulgence, however, for two personal recollections.

The first is the great pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Edmund at Pontigny in 1874. I well remember seeing him praying before the body of our Saint, dear alike to him and to us. There he was, immersed in his devotion, the same holy man as ever, spending many hours in the early morning in administering the Sacraments, then saying his own Mass later in the day. It was a great day for all Edmundians, and if by our little public act of faith we gained a blessing on our Alma Mater, we well knew that much of this was due to his

prayers and his vigils. And to him it was truly a day of joy.

The other recollection calls back one of the greatest graces of his life. The aged Pontiff Pius IX., after being despoiled of his civil sovereignty, and having undergone trials and persecutions, lay at the point of death. Cardinal Manning happened to come to Rome just at the time, and he brought his friend, Father Butler, with him. It was the end of December in the year 1877. I was myself in Rome, then a young layman, when he came; and together we went to the great Basilica of St. Peter, which was filled to overflowing, for a solemn Novena was going on for the dying Pontiff. It was his great ambition to assist at his death: and his wish was granted. He has often described to me the scene. There were praying round that death-bed dignitaries of the Church, bishops, archbishops, and cardinals. He obtained admission in order to act if necessary as messenger, and he joined in the prayers. My brethren, there were many great men, men of position in the Church, men of holiness of life, praying round the death-bed of that great servant of God; but I venture to say that there was not one of them whose prayers were of greater avail before the throne of God than his were. To assist at such a death-bed must react upon one's life. We may point, indeed, to the fact as one of no small interest that at the conclave which followed, and which resulted in the election of our present Holy Father, he was one

of those who assisted; and he is probably almost the only priest from England who has assisted at one in recent times. But it was a far greater grace to him, a more true joy, to assist at the death of one who was so renowned for his sanctity.

But I must pass on. The last twenty years of his life were given to a different work—that of education. It was not what he had expected, nor what he thought his talents fitted him for; but as soon as he knew it was God's will, that was enough. It became a joy to him. He threw himself into it with his customary thoroughness. Not a word about his own supposed unfitness for the task allotted to him. Not a word of hesitation or regret. With his old spirit he gave himself to his new life with all his power. Of his work at St. Charles's, his self-sacrifice for the good of his pupils, his personal intercourse with every one of them, there are many still with us to bear witness. And of the work he did in more recent years as spiritual father at Oscott our own students who have been there can tell us. It is only the truth to say that there was no one connected with the work there more universally venerated by all, superiors and students alike, during the six years in which he visited the College.

But his pastoral work extended beyond the limits of college or seminary, and ever seemed to expand. Those who had learned to come to him, to lean upon him, found him as ready as ever to give them his time. The work of a schoolmaster is considered enough for some; it was not enough

for him, and, often and often, after a long day in the school and in the class-room, he would spend the greater part of his night in writing letters of consolation and of help to those in trouble.

And now we come to one of the greatest trials of his life. For over thirty years he was at the side of his venerated superior, Cardinal Manning, through all times, alike of sunshine and cloud, ever advising him, comforting him, strengthening him, speaking to him of the things of God, as no one else could do. At length the Cardinal's last hour came, suddenly and unexpectedly, though not without a few days of warning. But his beloved confessor was not at his side. He was on his way to Rome, as the bearer of important communications relating to this College. On his arrival there he learnt of the simultaneous passing away of his own master and of Cardinal Simeoni, Prefect of Propaganda, to whom the letters he bore were addressed. Quickly he hastened back to lay his master in the grave, and then quietly he returned to his daily labours. All was joy. His father had gone, and he had to continue his work without him; but he knew how close he remained to him, and that after a little more time he himself would follow. And so he worked on peacefully and hopefully and joyously.

Reverend fathers and dear brethren, we pass on to the end of his life. Death came to him quickly, and found him in the midst of his work, as Rector of St. Charles's College and President of the Conference of Catholic Colleges of England.

Can we say that even death was to him a joy? Is it too much to hope that what is by the common consent of mankind too awful to speak about—almost even to think about—could be so sanctified as to be accepted joyfully and willingly? My dear brethren, let us trust his own words. Time after time he has said that he could never look on death except with feelings of tenderness and longing; that God was sweetest when He called upon us to make sacrifices for Him.

The time came. He died as he had lived, in the midst of his labours, having been occupied to within a few days of his death with the ordinary routine work of a school, but work sanctified and elevated by a knowledge of how fruitful so much apparent drudgery becomes in the salvation of souls. The room in which he died is a worthy witness to his life. Poverty of the truest, because without any ostentation, evidences around of days spent in work, and nights with a meagre allowance of rest—these were the surroundings which witnessed the worthy ending to a life of toil. On the table, letters and correspondence which were actually passing through his hands when the summons came.

Four days he had to prepare—days when, for the first time within my recollection, he ceased from his daily labour. And of his prayer and communion with God during those days, his thoughts when he received his Saviour as his Viaticum, who shall speak, who shall dare even to think? Death came, and on the Feast of All Saints—a feast which he

would have chosen before all others, a feast which breathes throughout the joy of Christianity and the beauty of lives given to the service of God—he passed away.

And now he has gone, what are we to say ; what are we to do ? Can his present state, if indeed he is in purgatory, can his state now, I ask, be also a matter of joy to him ? Can the sufferings given in order to purify us for the vision of God, which are described to us as being so grievous, be a subject of joy ? Surely there can be but one answer. One who has known God and lived for God and given his whole soul to God will surely long for all the purgatory possible, that will make him more acceptable to Him, more fit to appear before Him.

But in proportion to his holiness will be his longing for the time when he is to see the face of God. "As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul longeth for thee, O my God ! My soul hath thirsted after the strong living God, when shall I come and appear before the face of God ? My tears have been my bread day and night, whilst it is said to me daily, Where is thy God ?" (Ps. xli.). Our prayers can help him now as never before, they can do the work of suffering, the work of purification, and hasten the time of his release. Is it much to ask that we who have been comforted by him through life and have had his help with that sympathetic self-sacrifice so peculiarly his, should not forget him now he is gone ?

And now one last thought. In the history of

our own St. Edmund we learn how his faithful friend St. Richard venerated him, how he was by his side in his later years, how he was constant to him till the end; and when he had closed his eyes and taken leave of him at Pontigny, he stood at the threshold of the Abbey, about to go forth and face the world alone. And his friend and biographer tells us of his feeling of desolation:—

“Orphan of such a father,” he says, “he would perchance have transgressed the bounds of religious grief, if he had not feared to murmur against the providence of God, and if he had not believed that his venerable father had exchanged this wretched life for an immortal state of happiness.”

But when St. Richard himself had to face persecution, he adds, “Like the Apostle, being reviled he blessed, being persecuted he suffered it, yea, from what he had endured with St. Edmund he had learnt how to suffer.” “For his father though dead was as one still living . . . for he strenuously endeavoured to imitate him so far as human frailty would permit. Oh, how frequently did he pronounce the name of Blessed Edmund, how was it ever on his lips and in his heart! For as often as anything was spoken, or anything performed, or anything preached resembling the virtues of Blessed Edmund, he was wont to add: ‘Thus used my father Edmund to speak, thus to act, thus to preach.’ For he was diligent in recounting his acts and his virtues, but still more diligent in imitating them.”

My reverend fathers, my dearest brethren, can

we ask for anything better than that, receiving this sacred treasure into our midst, to be with us for all time, we may make similar words our own? "Though our father is dead, he shall be as one still living—thus used my father to speak, thus to act, thus to preach;" and let us pray that "whilst we are diligent in recounting his acts and his virtues, we may be still more diligent in imitating them"—that our life may be full of joy in the Holy Ghost, till such time as God may complete His work in us and take us to Himself.

THE INFLUENCE OF ST. EDMUND

THE SERMON PREACHED ON ST. EDMUND'S DAY, 1903,
BY THE RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR WARD, PRESIDENT.*

“Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ.”—I COR. v. 16.

WE are met to-day under the shadow of a great anxiety, and one which is meant to impress itself on our feelings, perhaps for years to come, for God has sent it to us at the very time when we should otherwise be rejoicing. Its effect is visible to all. A glance at the stalls of this chapel reveals an immediate contrast between to-day and other St. Edmund's feasts, with which we are so familiar. We are accustomed to see our friends from far and near, past students of the College, sons of St. Edmund, assemble in this church, which is to us such a centre of sacred memories, to join in our rejoicing, to venerate with us the memory of our

* The following sermon was preached under special circumstances on the Feast of St. Edmund, 1903. Shortly before the festival one of the boys, Athol Gompertz, was suddenly seized with an illness, and lay for days in danger of death. The usual gathering of old Edmundians thus became impossible, and the Feast Day itself was observed in anxiety and gloom. On the evening of the Feast, however, an improvement set in, and the boy's life was spared.

heavenly patron, to beg for a share in his intercession and prayers. To-day, however, we are alone, assembled by ourselves as we are wont to assemble week by week and day by day, to keep by ourselves and in the privacy of our own community the same solemnity which usually draws so many of our friends to us.

The reason you know. And although we still hope that by God's mercy we may be spared the fulness of grief which a few hours ago seemed imminent, the shadow of anxiety still remains upon us, and so long as this anxiety lasts, we prefer to keep ourselves shut in by our own walls, even as Mary mourned in the privacy of her own home for the loss of her brother Lazarus, and to leave to a more suitable occasion the greetings of our friends. They will not indeed forget us. Those who had hoped to be here to-day know well the reason of their enforced absence. They are with us in spirit, praying with us and for us in our anxiety, and joining in our intentions. Among them is he who had promised to speak to you this morning on the virtues and spirit of our heavenly patron, and of the reasons why we in this College cherish our title to be called Edmundians. And so it falls to my lot to supply his place. My words on such an occasion must be few. The anxious hours recently past have prevented me from giving time and thought to any words that I might address to you. But I cannot let the day pass without a few thoughts about our patron, and the meaning of the feast we are keeping.

The simple thought I will place before you is the work done by every servant of God in the world by his personal influence on those with whom he comes in contact. Our Lord in one of His parables compared the world to a field in which good seed was planted, and was oversown by cockle. "An enemy hath done this," was His comment (Matt. xiii. 28); and it is owing to the work of this enemy that from the time of the Fall, the life of servants of God in this world has ever been one of fighting. Our Lord tells us that "God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting;" and that "God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by him" (John iii. 17). Again, He said, "I am the light of the world" (John viii. 12); and "I will give my flesh for the life of the world" (John vi. 52). Yet He gave testimony that the world did not know Him, and would not receive Him. "Just Father, the world hath not known Thee" (John xvii. 25). "Wo to the world because of scandals" (Matt. xviii. 7). It seems then that there are two meanings attributed to the word, one representing mankind in general, the other representing human nature as corrupted, with all the godless principles it has given rise to. These are the two principles which are ever at war with one another, the spirit which moved our Lord to come to save the world, and the corruption of human nature which is ever resisting His grace.

There is no doubt which of these two spirits

will win in the end, for our Lord gave testimony, "Have confidence, I have overcome the world" (John xvi. 33). How did He overcome the world? Again He tells us, "If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to Myself" (John xii. 32). He drew others to Himself by His Divine teaching and example, and by the love He showed in suffering for us. The work He has entrusted to those who come after Him is to continue His own by using the same weapons as He used. We are to reproduce His spirit in our lives that others may learn it from us. We may be unworthy, we may be wanting in zeal or in earnestness, or have many faults. It is one of the most tender compassions of our heavenly Father that, all unworthy though we be, He entrusts to us His great works in the world and all the grave issues which are bound up with them. We are to work for Him, and for this object, to give to His service all our power, all our influence over others, all our energy, even as did the Saints. And what has been the secret of their influence over their followers?—of St. Benedict over the early monks, of St. Ignatius over his companions, of St. Francis or St. Dominic over his friars, of the Curé of Ars in our own time over his flock, and of multitudes of others? The secret has not, I think, been in their miracles, remarkable though these may often have been; but rather in the more continuous and living influence of their personal character and virtues. For who ever had such influence over any one as St. John Baptist had over his disciples? And yet

we read that he worked *no* miracles (John x. 41). But he had learnt—and learnt in advance—the spirit of Christianity, so that he could give testimony: “Behold the Lamb of God” (John i. 29). Take again St. Paul, of whom we know perhaps more than of any other Saint of the Apostolic time. He did indeed work some miracles; but they were not a feature in his life. The feature of his life was the relation between him and his converts which is summed up in those oft-spoken words he addressed to them: “If you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus by the Gospel I have begotten you: wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ” (1 Cor. iv. 15, 16).

Let us think of the life of St. Edmund as illustrating the power for good by his personal influence, and by reproducing the image of Christ in himself. His was a simple nature. Many others have overcome themselves by religious rule, or by vows of poverty and obedience, and by cutting themselves off from all things which would impede their work. To St. Edmund the restrictions of a monk were not necessary. The love of God permeated his whole being, and he was not afraid to give full play to his human affections and aspirations, which became, as it were, sanctified by their very contact with him. He was a dutiful and loving son, a fond and affectionate brother, a faithful and sympathetic friend. He had work to do in the world, living in the world, and sanctifying himself in all simplicity by the daily affairs of life. With all his mortification and

austerity of life, he was outwardly as other people, while within he lived ever close to his God. It was this simplicity of holiness which seems to have been the charm of his character, and which enabled him to exert the influence he did over those among whom he lived.

In considering the work of his life, then, we naturally turn in the first place to his home and early surroundings, to see how his character and virtues were built up. We like to think of our English homes as one of the purest features of our country; but it is only when the natural domestic virtues are elevated into their higher sphere by a knowledge and love of God that they shine forth in all their beauty. We can see the home at Abingdon, where St. Edmund learned his early lessons of virtue. His father forms one of the group only in very early years, before he retired to end his days in a monastery; and the home afterwards consisted of Mabel, St. Edmund's saintly mother, and her four children. Here we come face to face with the strong influence which taught him his early lessons of piety, an influence which was the figure of that which he himself was afterwards to exert on others. It is a characteristic of many of the Saints that they became so under the influence of a holy mother. Of all the influences between one human being and another, that between mother and child is the one marked out by nature as the most intimate. Its strength in this case can be measured by the words his brother Robert breaks out into in his biography of our Saint: "O woman,

rightly called stronger than he who storms cities," he says, "who to punish her own faults waged war against herself. In the education of her children she had the prudence of Sara, in the presence of men she had the modesty of Rebecca, before God she had the sweetness of Rachel; but in the presence of her neighbour she was attributed happiness in her offspring even as Lia." ¹

We look forward a few years, and we see another scene in the same familiar home at Abingdon. We find the first great grief of his life as St. Edmund kneels to receive the last blessing of his dying mother, who (we read), "after this was silent, and putting aside all thoughts of earthly affairs, fixed her mind upon God. Nor did she further recognise son or daughter, but with the eyes of her soul fixed upon heaven, even as were the eyes of her body, she expired." She was dead, and yet she was as one still living. For centuries afterwards her tomb was the glory of Abingdon. In the midst of the Church of St. Nicholas, which still stands with its same Norman arches which were familiar to St. Edmund, in front of the great rood was a stone tomb on which was inscribed the epitaph to Mabel, the Flower of Widows. *Mulierem fortem quis inveniet.*—"Who shall find a valiant woman? Far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her." O woman, rightly called stronger than he

¹ This and subsequent quotations can be found in my book on *St. Edmund: His Life as told by Old English Writers* (Sands, 1903). Reasons for attributing this life to Robert Rich, see *St. Edmund of Abingdon*, by the Baroness de Paravicini, p. 21, *seq.*

who storms camps and cities, what stronger than her training of her offspring? "Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ."

And now we may glance for a few moments on our patron's life in these his early years. He had been at school at Oxford; but the great learning for which he was celebrated was acquired at Paris, then the centre of the intellectual world, before he returned to his own Oxford, there to teach for many years, and to found an influence the effect of which may even now be seen there.

We may think of him as student and then as teacher. We may picture him hearing Mass in his own Lady Chapel, which he himself had built at Oxford, or at the night offices which he attended so regularly at St. Merri at Paris, of the continual charitable work which he contrived to unite with his life of study. All told of one who exerted very unusual influence with those with whom he came into contact. "Study," he would say, "as though you were to live for ever; but live as though you were to die to-morrow."

But it was as a Professor and lecturer that his influence was more fully felt. We have a beautiful picture given to us of his teaching, given by one of his most intimate friends:—

"His books were placed before him on the students' table, and in front at the head of the table he had an image of Blessed Mary the Virgin, of the purest ivory and of singular beauty, and all round about her throne were shown, in wonderful carving, the mysteries of our redemption. . . . From his book

he took his lecture ; to the image he addressed his prayer ; from both came forth the sweetness of contemplation and the contemplation of sweetness. . . . Thus lecture gave place to prayer, prayer to contemplative devotion, contemplation to earnest lecture in peaceful interchange ; or rather they followed each other with marvellous rapture."

And as to his success as a lecturer and the influence he exerted over his pupils, we can again quote his biographer :—

"How devout and moving he was in his lectures is proved by the grace of devotion so frequently shed abroad on his hearers. For oftentimes many noted men, who were wont to flock together to hear him, with one accord closed their books during the lecture, for they could not refrain themselves from tears. . . . Hence it came to pass that many renowned doctors came forth from his schools, who followed in the steps of his holiness according to their measure. For there was infused into him a heavenly grace which spread itself from his lips to others, and the flame which burnt on the altar of his own heart showed to others more clearly than any illumination the road in which to walk."

But any idea of his work and influence would be very incomplete which limited itself to his work in the lecture-room. The influence of his life extended far beyond any such limits, and often he yielded to the exhortation of his friends and consented, notwithstanding what he considered his unworthiness, to receive sacred orders, his pastoral

work became united to that of his teaching. Thus one of his most intimate pupils sums up his recollections of him at Oxford by saying that, "In holy Scripture he was a renowned doctor, in preaching he was marvellously fervent and devout; in hearing confessions he was assiduous, and a most holy and prudent guide, even as I found in my own case; he was a lover of poverty and a friend of the poor; zealous in his love of souls; with a hatred of degradation and of vice, which he strove everywhere and at all times to uproot." He adds that "his joy had a fitting gravity; and he showed mirth and gladness and joy in the Holy Ghost."

We long to picture him to ourselves as he would be seen in the streets of mediæval Oxford, and the few details left us by his brother Robert almost enable us to do so. We learn that he was somewhat above the average height, and that "his features were well proportioned, and possessed of a subtle and joyous graciousness, and his complexion was fresh beyond that of the other disputants." His garments were grey, "neither too mean nor too costly, as is demanded by the dignity of the clerical state, which should be encircled by virtues;" and they reached to the ground, like those of a religious, and he wore nothing on his head.

Such is the picture we form to ourselves of the student and Professor whose life shed its lustre on the students of early Oxford. Did time permit, we could enumerate many distinguished men whose characters were formed in the school of St. Edmund—archbishops, bishops, abbots, ecclesiastics, and

laymen. Over all of these his power lay in his holiness, because he reproduced the sweetness of his contemplation, that is of his Divine Master. "Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ."

We have dwelt at some length on the work of our Saint as a scholar and teacher, because in a house such as this, it is this feature of St. Edmund, as patron of Catholic studious youth, which naturally appeals to us; and his work in this capacity occupied perhaps two-thirds of his active life. But we must now pass on. He resigned his Professorial chair in order to devote himself to more directly pastoral work. For a time we find him going about cross in hand, preaching the Crusade, and firing the hearts of his hearers with a chivalrous longing to fight for Christ. He accepted the post of treasurer in the Chapter of Salisbury, where he lived for the greater part of the year; during the remaining part he was at the small rectory of Calne in Wiltshire, where he lived the life of a parish priest, surrounded by his flock. Here it was that he was found by the messengers who came from Canterbury to tell him that he had been chosen to the highest office in the English Church, and that he would have to leave his retirement and take a leading part in national affairs.

Not without great reluctance did he consent to accept the dignity. If he did so at last, it was because others represented to him the need of an unworldly archbishop at that time, and the strength of the influence he would have for good. That influence he used to its utmost. Few things are

more remarkable than his success during the first part of his episcopate, standing as it does in contrast to the difficulties with which he was overwhelmed later. The king at that time, Henry III., stood in need of wise counsellors, for he was in the hands of time-servers and others who were working for their own ends, St. Edmund quickly gained an ascendancy over him which became stronger than that of the courtiers. He seemed able to obtain almost anything of the king, and all for the real good of his subjects. The king himself bore witness to this power, in touching words which have been handed down to us. "Oh how well thou knowest how to pray!" he said; "pray in this manner to God for me, and I doubt not that as God is more merciful than I am, He will generously hear thee. But I also will hear thee: be it done as thou hast requested."

But God tries His servants, and St. Edmund was not to be prepared for so high a place in heaven without suffering of no ordinary nature. It would be tedious to enumerate the various oppositions arrayed against him during the last three years of his life. The Benedictines of his own chapter carried on their law-suits long and pertinaciously, while the king, who had once more got into the hands of evil counsellors, induced the Pope to send a legate to override the Saint's decisions, and he found himself powerless. He journeyed to Rome to seek redress, and appeared to have succeeded in obtaining it; but before he got home, the work he had done had been reversed. He found, in other

words, that his influence for good was gone, and what was left to him, asks his biographer, but to retire and prepare for death ?

During his last days in England special favours were granted him by Providence, and his saintly predecessor, St. Thomas, appeared more than once to comfort him. We read of his last farewell interview with the king, over whom he had once had such power, after which he took ship for France. "And when he was in the ship sailing, looking back on England, he wept bitterly, knowing in spirit that he would never see it again, and that the kingdom would suffer infinite evils, and the Church be oppressed with great servitude."

We come now to the last phase of his life—the few tranquil weeks he was given to prepare at Pontigny for his end. For it was soon evident that his end was at hand. Pontigny had already many claims on the gratitude of Englishmen. It had received our bishops time after time when exiled for their duty, now it was to begin its long history which renders it to this day specially dear to all sons of St. Edmund. For although it was not privileged to receive his last breath, it has had the grace of the presence of his body and shrine for over six and a half centuries.

St. Edmund's death took place at the little country priory of Soissy, some sixty miles off, whither he had retired in search of a more bracing climate and quieter surroundings. On the spot where his blessed soul left his body stands to-day a little wayside church, constructed out of the ruins of the ancient

priory. It is dedicated to St. Edmund, and every year, on the anniversary of his glorious death, people come from far and near to hear Mass in his honour, so that at this very moment our Saint is being honoured on the spot where he died.

A full account of his last hours has been given by one who was present throughout :—

“ When, as his illness became worse, he saw that his last day was approaching, he commanded that the Holy Viaticum should be brought to him, making ready his lamp in the meantime, so that when his Lord should come, he might go forth not unprepared to meet Him. And how bright was that lamp, how precious the oil which he had stored up within himself, those words testify which, when the Viaticum was brought to him, he addressed to his Lord, as though He was verily approaching him, saying : ‘ Thou art He, O Lord, in whom I have believed, whom I have taught, whom I have preached ; and Thou art my witness that so long as I have been in the world, I have sought nothing but Thee. Into Thy guardianship I commend my spirit.’ . . .

“ On the third day afterwards he begged to receive the sacrament of the dying, extreme unction. Then he requested that a crucifix, with the images of Blessed Mary and Blessed John, should be placed before his eyes. . . . Then, taking a little wine, with his own hands he washed the places of the nails on the crucifix and the lance wound in the side, and making the sign of the cross over the ablution, he drank it, saying, in the words of Isaias : ‘ You shall draw water with joy from the Saviour’s

fountains.' After this he never drank again. . . . And then in fine, on the week-day on which Christ the true Life tasted death for those who are dead in sin, about the hour when the morning sun ascends the heavens, brighter than the sun he ascended his heavenly throne, as one falling asleep, without any agony such as usually comes to the dying, passing from his cell to heaven, from the body of death to the land of the living, from the misery of mankind to the joy of the angels."

And then we come to a last great feature of our Saint, his personal influence after death. Not only during his funeral procession back to Pontigny, which drew thousands from the surrounding country, but also during the long years that followed, his shrine was the centre of more devotion, especially of the English, than any, with perhaps the single exception of his predecessor, St. Thomas. The miracles worked at Pontigny almost exceed belief. For three centuries, till in fact our country lost the faith, St. Edmund remained one of the most popular of English Saints. Many of those who had opposed him in life—including King Henry himself—made pilgrimage to Pontigny to do penance at his tomb. The monastery was endowed by the Archbishops of Canterbury, and was always the centre of much English devotion. Then came the time when the faith was obscured amongst us, the dark days of persecution and penal laws against Catholics. These have now happily passed away, and the end of them synchronised almost exactly with the revival of devotion to St. Edmund in the establishment of this

College. "Thus was the new College instituted," wrote the holy bishop our founder, "under the protection of St. Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury. *Felix faustumque sit.*" Certainly we re-echo these words, *felix faustumque sit*, and we see in this dedication a reason to fill us with hopefulness as to the future. It was as St. Edmund's return to his beloved country after his long exile; and we as Edmundians rejoice to think of the influence of St. Edmund's life over past generations of students, both clerical and lay; and we look upon it as our highest privilege that we can place ourselves under the same sweet influence. May God grant that we may be faithful to this great grace.

And now one little thought in conclusion.

It requires a Saint to fully understand the mind of a Saint, and one of the greatest consolations of St. Edmund's life was his intimacy with his friend and chancellor, St. Richard. It was not till towards the end of his life that this intimacy sprang up. It seems to have been a grace given to him specially as a help in the trials of his latter years. "The archbishop rejoiced that by his chancellor's care he was delivered from the turmoil of external affairs; the chancellor rejoiced to be trained by the holiness and heavenly conversation of his lord. Each leant upon the other; saint upon saint, master upon disciple, disciple upon master; father on son, son on father, so that to the spiritual onlooker it was given to behold them as two cherubims guarding the ark of the Lord, that is the Church of Canterbury."

St. Richard remained by the side of his master until death; and after that devoted himself to work for his canonisation. He had himself, as Bishop of Chichester, many and grievous trials to go through, and the keynote of his whole life was devotion to St. Edmund. And he had the consolation of seeing his canonisation, and of personally assisting at the translation of our Saint's body at Pontigny. We have his own description of his feelings when he opened the coffin and found the features he had known so well still incorrupt:—

“We speak what we know, and we bear witness to what we have seen. With our own hands we have touched his holy body; his head with its hair lying thick and uninjured we have carefully and reverently and even joyfully arranged.” And then he goes on to describe how “in presence of the Lord King of the French (St. Louis) and his holy mother, and many other great men, cardinals, bishops, abbots, and other venerable prelates, at Pontigny was celebrated the translation of our most blessed Father Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury and Confessor, to the no small increase of honour to our nation.”

Thus then, my brethren, were the holy relics of our Saint, the body which shall one day be reunited to his soul in the presence of God, first raised for public veneration in the Abbey Church at Pontigny. And there in the same Church of Pontigny it rests to the present day, still venerated and honoured. Six and a half centuries have passed away; there have been wars and rumours of wars,

and pestilences and famines and earthquakes. The church at Pontigny itself has been more than once the scene of violence and destruction; but the shrine of St. Edmund has survived all dangers. We may see the holy body to-day close by the spot where St. Richard saw it then. We may gaze on the same features of his holy countenance, not indeed in all their freshness as he saw them, for with the ravages of time the mark of death has in some measure asserted itself thereon, even though it seems to have been specially preserved from the more ordinary mark of corruption. But though changed in appearance, it is still the same body which St. Richard looked upon that day. Nay, we have here in our chapel, as one of our most precious possessions, a large relic which formed part of the body at that time. Kneeling in spirit then before St. Edmund, can we not hear him describe the personal influence that he would wish his life to have over us: "Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ"?

But finally we read of St. Richard that his one remaining ambition was that "he ardently longed with all his might to consecrate one church in honour of Blessed Edmund before his last day should close in upon him." And when this prayer was granted and he consecrated the Church of St. Edmund at Dover, he said in his sermon that day: "I give thanks to God, who has not refused me the desire of my soul. And now therefore I know that the time for me to put off this tabernacle is at hand, and I beg the support of your prayers."

That night his last illness took hold of him. He died, and was buried before the altar of St. Edmund in his own cathedral at Chichester.

Can we not see a sense in which to apply this also to ourselves? Is it not our ambition to dedicate one temple, even ourselves, our body and our soul, to St. Edmund? Do we not, as loyal Edmundians, look on this as a privilege to aim at? Is it not the completion of his influence over us? Then, when this dedication is complete, our work here will be done. God will take us, as we hope, to the heavenly kingdom, there in presence of St. Richard and St. Edmund to bless Him eternally.

ST. GREGORY THE GREAT

A SERMON PREACHED IN ST. EDMUND'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, AT
THE VOTIVE MASS, CELEBRATED ON THE OCCASION OF THE
THIRTEEN HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF
ST. GREGORY, THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT, 1904,

BY REV. EDWIN BURTON, VICE-PRESIDENT.

THIRTEEN hundred years ago yesterday, my dear brethren, there passed away from this life to life eternal Gregory the Pope, who styled himself "The servant of the servants of God," but who is known to history as "Gregory the Great"—the Apostle of the English.

Nearly a year before, he had written that "his one consolation was the hope of the speedy approach of death."¹ At Christmas he was so weak that he could scarcely address the Lombard Ambassadors.² In January, ever mindful of others amid his own sufferings, he was writing with a gift of clothing for a bishop ill-provided against the bitter cold of that year.³ And then a silence falls. His letters cease, and we have no word from those who stood around him during the last days and hours. There is no account of his death-bed. Only the brief notice in the *Liber Pontificalis* that he died on March 12, and

¹ Ep. ad Rusticianam Patriciam, xiii. 22, "solaque mihi consolatio sit mortis expectatio."

² Ep. ad Theodelindam Langobardorum Reginam, xiv. 12.

³ Ep. ad Venantium Perusinum Episcopum, xii. 47.

that he was buried *in Basilica Sancti Petri Apostoli ante secretarium.*

Those who stood around the open tomb were, no doubt, full of the great things Pope Gregory had done during the fourteen years he had ruled the Church of God. Perhaps some mention was made that among other greater and, as it seemed, more fruitful labours he had found time to send his missionaries to certain savage barbarians in the far-away island of Britain, that he founded an Archbishopric among them, and had from time to time been cheered by reports of the gradual spread of Christianity in those remote lands.

Yesterday, my brethren, after an interval of 1300 years there took place another gathering noteworthy to us. In our new Cathedral we saw the Holy Sacrifice offered to God by our English Archbishop, who wore the same sacred Roman Pallium that St. Gregory had sent to the first English Archbishop, St. Augustine. And round him were gathered the bishops of his Province. Every diocese had sent its prelate, or other representative; from Hexham and Newcastle in the north to Portsmouth and Plymouth in the south; from Northampton on the east to Liverpool, Menevia, and Clifton on the west, came those whom the Holy Ghost has chosen to rule the Churches. And around them was a great multitude of clergy and laity. Side by side with the secular priests were all the great Religious Orders. There were the Benedictines, the monks of St. Gregory's own order, and the Carmelites, old even in his day; there were the mediæval Orders, the

Friars Preachers and the Friars Minor ; there were those newer societies and congregations that did not exist for a thousand years after St. Gregory's time, the Jesuits, the Passionists, the Redemptorists. In that gathering you could read the history of all the ages. It was the Catholic Church in England collected in one spot. And the cause of the gathering, and the bond between all those present, was love and reverence for this dead Pope—this living Saint, whose work on this earth was closed thirteen hundred years ago.

In a few days this solemn thanksgiving, yesterday and to-day offered by one nation, will be repeated on a grander scale in the name of the universal Church, when our Holy Father Pope Pius will himself sing Mass in St. Peter's in honour of his great predecessor St. Gregory.

My dear brethren, there have been many popes before and since ; many of these popes have been saints ; their anniversaries and centenaries come and go unnoticed. Why is it that this anniversary, this centenary, has struck a chord in the heart of the Church of God that moves her to these solemnities ? England has indeed good cause—St. Gregory is the Apostle of the English. But why does all the Church rejoice ? Why is he not called St. Gregory the First ? Why have all nations joined in calling him St. Gregory the Great ?

Listen for a little to the story of St. Gregory. It is worth listening to and learning, for it takes us among the great things of Time and of Eternity.

The birth of St. Gregory takes us into the very

heart of Rome, the centre of the capital of the world. It is true that the Emperors were now residing at Constantinople, and Rome, shorn of the imperial grandeur, was left to the government of nominal consuls and a prætor. But it was still classical Rome; though taken and retaken within a few years by Goths and other barbarians, it had not yet been sacked and ruined. It was still the City of the Cæsars, as unrivalled in architectural magnificence as in wealth of memories.

Gregory's home lay in the centre of the splendour. On the right hand was the Lateran Palace of the Popes, and before it lay the Palatine, crowned by the Palace of the Cæsars, still untouched in its magnificence. This birthplace of Gregory is a place for ever memorable to us, Catholics of England. When he had given his patrimony all to God and made his home into a monastery, it was from these doors that his missionaries set out to convert this land. Within those walls had the first Archbishop of Canterbury been a monk. And in these later days, the Cardinalitial Church on the same spot has given new memories to the early story of the See of Westminster. It is a name whose music has long rung in our ears—"the title of St. Andrew and St. Gregory on the Cœlian Hill."

There he was born; it was in or about the year 540. He was born, we may say, into the ruling classes. His father was a Senator of noble family. In his veins ran the blood of statesmen and rulers. In after years it was natural to him to lead. Something, too, he inherited from his mother. She was a

saint. Well may the Church pray *pro devoto feminæo sexu*, that army of unknown Catholic mothers, to whom she owes so many saints, so many priests.

One thing more he gained from his parents—the example of his vocation. When he came to manhood, they separated to give their lives more fully to God. Gordianus became a Deacon “Regionarius,” Sylvia retired to a little cell near St. Paul’s.

With such inheritance, what wonder that Gregory was a successful man? Wealth, rank, and talents marked him out for power. His reputation for learning and skill in Rhetoric was, according to Gregory of Tours, second to none. His success was rapid and complete. When he was only thirty-three years of age, all the power in the city was entrusted to his hands. The Emperor Justin II. appointed him Prætor of Rome. Surrounded by pomp and state, he had now, as governor, to rule, to organise, to issue decrees, to decide grave questions in law and in statesmanship. A great position and great opportunities for a man still young, a man with the inborn sense of mastery. And then—and then, within a year, in the midst of all the power, in the midst of all the splendour came that sudden call—deep down in the secret heart of the man, silent, but so imperative—the deepening conviction of the one thing necessary—the voice of Christ: “Come after me, and I will make you to be a fisher of men.”

When a vocation comes to a man of that stamp, there are but two things he can do; he must follow it, or he must kill it. There may be a period of struggle, but if it is a real vocation from God, there

will be an end to the struggle—either the vocation will conquer him, or he will oppose the will of God and stifle the grace, so lovingly sent by God, for the sanctification of himself and others.

It is easy for us, dear brethren, to talk of giving up the world for Christ. We are of small account in it, and our share is not much to give. But to a man, with both hands on life, a man with a task worth doing, it is another matter. We know from St. Gregory himself that the struggle did take place, and that the victory was a matter of time.

“Long did I put off the grace of conversion,” he wrote, “and after I was inspired with heavenly wishes, I thought it better to wear the habit of the world.”¹

But at last God’s grace won the noble heart, and in answer to the Divine call he was able to say with the utter abandonment of that Psalm of Vocation, “Preserve me, O Thou Mighty One, for I am altogether hidden in Thee. I have said to God, Thou art my Lord and my Master. . . . *Dominus pars hereditatis meæ et calicis mei*” — words we have spoken, or shall speak—“*Tu es qui restitues hereditatem meam*” (Ps. xv.).

We have spoken of Gregory’s earthly heritage. Henceforth his inheritance was in Christ.

So the powerful and splendid Prætor of Rome strips himself of the Trabea, his robe of state stiff with gems, strips himself of all authority, of all

¹ Cited by Rev. Horace Mann, *Lives of the Popes*, vol. i. p. 19, with reference, *Fp. ad Leandrum*, v. 53 q., al. I. 1. The Maurist edition does not seem to contain this letter.

possessions, of all consideration, and goes to serve God as a poor and unknown monk. Out of his family estates in Sicily he founds six monasteries ; in his family mansion on the Cœlian Hill he founds a seventh, and, having founded it, enters it as a monk, no longer to govern men, but humbly to serve God. We will not linger over the years that followed—quiet years in the Monastery of St. Andrew on the Cœlian Hill. We know that by penance and contemplation and the study of the Scriptures, Gregory the monk grew to be a Saint.

And we will not tell again that story we all know so well, of the Anglo-Saxon boys in the slave-market, though that day was eventful for us, for it woke in his heart that love for our nation, that pity for our sad state of heathendom that has made him our Apostle. We, his Angles, must be freed from the wrath of God, and admitted to the society of the angels, there to sing Alleluia for ever. And from that day the cry of his Angles was ever in his ears. When no one else cared, he cared. There were saints in Ireland, but no one came to us. There were great servants of God in Iona, but no one heeded us. It was the insight of Gregory that understood our condition. It was the courage of Gregory that tried to remedy it. It was the love of Gregory that was ready to devote his own life to preaching the Gospel to tribes of heathen barbarians in an obscure island across the sea.

He tried to do the task himself and he was not allowed, but when he became Pope and had the power, he took care that the work was done. His

love lasted through life, and it is because we do not believe that it ended with death, that we are gathered together to honour him now. We will not have him feel that his people are ungrateful or unmindful of his love. That is the inner meaning of our act of national worship yesterday; that is the meaning of this Votive Mass to-day.

He tried to come himself; he wrung reluctant consent from the Pope; he began his journey—and his disappearance was discovered. “Holy Father,” cry the Romans, surging round the Pope with loving filial boldness, “what have you done? In suffering Gregory to go away you have destroyed Rome, you have undone us and offended St. Peter.”

The Pope yields, letters of recall are despatched, messengers ride quickly, and Gregory is brought back. He returns to Rome and his monastery—yet the cry of his Angles is ever in his ears. Thus our conversion was consecrated by an act of obedience, and an act of sacrifice.

Once again we pass rapidly over a span of years, years spent in Rome and for Rome, during a time of growing difficulties and anxiety. For during this sixth century the retribution of history began. For hundreds of years Rome had poured army after army upon the nations. It was now the turn of the nations to pour horde after horde upon Rome. On this point the latest biographer of St. Gregory, Father Horace Mann, recalls Cardinal Newman's words. “First came the Goth, then the Hun, and then the Lombard. The Goth took possession, but

he was of a noble nature and soon lost his barbarism. The Hun came next, he was irreclaimable, but did not stay. The Lombard kept his savageness and his ground. He appropriated to himself the territory not the civilisation of Italy; fierce as the Hun and powerful as the Goth, the most tremendous scourge of Heaven.”¹ It was these Lombards who, in the year 579, were threatening a descent on Rome. The danger was urgent. The Pope sought instant help from the Emperor. “The State,” he wrote, “is in such a desperate pass here, that unless God move the compassion of the Emperor to grant to us a master of the soldiery and a leader, we are utterly helpless, for Rome is particularly defenceless. . . . May God therefore move him to come at once to our assistance before the troops of the unspeakable race are able to seize the places still held by the State.” So desperate a crisis needed an able minister. Pope Pelagius chose Gregory to be his legate, thus for six long years he remained at Constantinople, leading, in the royal palace, the life of a simple monk. We shall not follow him there. These years are a tale of statesmanship and diplomacy, controversy and literary labour. He prayed and toiled and studied as the saints are wont to do.

Recalled to Rome at length, but not to rest, new labours, fresh burdens are ever laid upon him. He is abbot of his monastery, he is Cardinal deacon, he is secretary to the Pope, in quick succession. Then comes the greatest of all. Among the first victims of the pestilence of the year 590 is Pope

¹ *Rise and Progress of Universities.*

Pelagius. The Romans in manifold distress turn to Gregory ; he is elected Pope.

We have said he was a born ruler of men. Now he has for his life-work the task of ruling the whole Church of God ; a task of the most awe-striking responsibility, were all things at peace. In his case, however, everything seems falling into ruin around him. The great Roman Empire itself is crumbling away before the barbarians ; the Church is suffering every sort of distress, and his own city of Rome lies in the most frightful confusion. Heavy rains had led to floods, the floods had brought the pestilence, the pestilence was followed by famine. Gregory had to encourage the panic-stricken people, to restore order and confidence, to find food and provisions, to repair the damage wrought by the flood, all this amid the strain of assuming the cares of the supreme pontificate. Ever present and pressing was the danger of the Lombards, the pitiless race whose fanatical hatred of the Catholics fore-shadowed the destruction of Rome. And if Gregory turned from the misery at home, what consolation could he win abroad ? At Constantinople the Patriarch, far from being a brother in need, was the cause of new anxieties ; and the haughty spirit, which led his ambition to seek undue honours, was a sad indication of the state in which the Eastern Church now lay. The Church in the east and west, where not actually suffering from persecution, was torn by a theological controversy about " The Three Chapters," a dispute which had its roots far down in the Nestorian and Monophysite heresies, and which set bishop against

bishop, and church against church. In Africa the Church was suffering a bitter persecution at the hands of the Donatist Vandals. Spain was undergoing the ravages of the Arian Visigoths, Gaul like Italy was torn by The Three Chapters controversy, and had, in addition, the disease of widespread simony in the Church itself. Britain lay swamped under a tide of heathendom, while the remnants of the ancient British Church lay scattered in Wales and Brittany. Only in one land was there peace. Ireland lay in the first fragrance of her conversion, nursing-mother of saints, preparing in her monasteries for the great burst of missionary zeal, which shortly was to overflow its limits and pour her missionaries into Gaul, Germany, Britain, Italy itself.

This was the state of the ancient world. This was the scene of confusion and distress, which Gregory—Pontifex Maximus—was to bring, if possible, into some sort of order and security. Never was there more need of a Pontifex—a bridge-builder, as some would have it—to span this chaos of anarchy. Civil disorder, persecution, heresy, schism, missionary needs, reforms, he had it all on his hands. This was his work as Vicar of Christ.

Fourteen years God gave him to do his task, and how he fulfilled it is written at length in his life and in his letters. Amid constant and growing ill-health he set himself to the work. By prayer, by calm wisdom, by quiet strength, by the personal influence of his character, by his writings, by his legates, by the faith and the hope and the love of a truly great man, he so wrought upon that seething mass, that

quietly and almost imperceptibly the face of things was changed. There were no miracles, no revolutions, there still remained trouble and danger and short-comings, but at the end of those fourteen years, when the time came for Gregory to enter into the joy of his Lord, his life-work was apparent in the changed conditions of each and every land. In Italy the advance of the Lombards had been checked, many of them, including their king, had been converted to Christ, in Spain the conversion of the Visigoths was well-nigh complete, in Africa the Donatists were rooted out, and there was comparative peace for the Church in those lands. Gaul was purged of her simony, and though the controversy of The Three Chapters was not closed, yet a way had been prepared for the settlement which was effected a hundred years later. In the Eastern Church, the Nestorians and the Eutychians had been repressed, while in the West the reformation of the morals of the clergy had moved apace. In Rome a strong and firm government had been set up with systematic relief of the poor and organised redemption of captives. Moreover, a great work had been done for the Liturgy and Sacred Music of the Roman Church, work which has grown into the very life of the Universal Church and become inseparably bound up with her worship. But beyond all this, and to us greater than all this, our Apostle had won the desire of his heart, he had opened the Gate of Heaven to his Angles. Though he could not come himself, he had sent Augustine, and the conversion of England was begun.

The story is written in the History of Venerable Bede, and as we turn his pages over we realise how largely the conversion of England was due to the personal influence of Gregory. It was far from being merely the despatch of a company of missionaries to our shores. Had it been nothing else than that it would have been a failure indeed. For St. Augustine and his companions, terrified by the accounts they received of the ferocity and stubborn perversity of our race, turned back and would proceed no further. It was Gregory who urged them to the further effort. His letter is to be found in St. Bede, and in it we still hear the tones of his affection. "May the Almighty God protect you by His grace, and allow me in our eternal home to see the fruit of your labour; so that although I am not able to labour with you, yet I may be joined with you in the joy of the reward: because I wish so to labour."¹ It was all his work: the Sees of Canterbury and York are named by him; advice, warnings, directions are given by him; relics and books and vestments are sent by him. On every page of Venerable Bede we find new pledges of his love, and, as the news of the growing success reaches him in Rome, it gladdens him until the loving heart breaks out into words, and in the midst of his commentary on Job he pours forth his joy. "Lo! the tongue of Britain, which before could only utter barbarous sounds, has lately learned to make the Alleluia of the Hebrews resound in praise of God. Lo! the ocean, formerly so turbulent, lies

¹ Liber i. c. xxiii.

calm and submissive at the feet of the saints, and its wild movements, which earthly princes could not control by the sword, are spellbound with the fear of God by a few simple words from the mouth of priests; and he who, when an unbeliever, never dreaded troops of fighting men, now fears the tongues of the meek."¹

The success indeed was great. The Saxons were converted in their thousands; saints rose up in all ranks. Kings on their thrones, St. Ethelbert in the south, St. Edwin in the north became pioneers of the Faith. In a few decades England was Christian, the island of Saints, the dowry of Mary.

Gregory planted, Augustine watered, God gave the increase.

From that time never has the name of Gregory been forgotten in this land. He died, and his English children inserted his name in the Litanies of the Saints. Two centuries pass, and the Council of Clovesho in 747 decrees that his feast is to be a holiday in all religious houses. Six centuries pass, and the Council of Oxford in 1222 extends this holiday to the whole of England. So for a thousand years, or nearly so.

And then the storm. All the work of a thousand years seemed rooted up, and the faith we had learned from Rome was denied and proscribed. And the great traditions of the English Church ran in the narrow channels of the few Colleges abroad.

Had St. Gregory's memory any place at Douay?

¹ Liber xxvii. in cap. xxxvi., Beati Job, cap. xi. n. 21.

Men who were to be martyrs needed a martyr patron. They chose the martyred St. Thomas of Canterbury as their chief patron. But next to him was St. Gregory, the Apostle of England. His feast was to be kept with High Mass and holiday. Devotion to him was strong in the house. When Douay put forth a daughter-house at Paris, the new foundation was St. Gregory's. We find, too, his venerable name on the lips of the martyrs in the law-courts and on the scaffold. When the hangman was tearing at the heart of the Venerable Edmund Gennings the martyr gasped with his last breath, "*O Beate Gregori, ora pro me!*" "Oh egregious Papist," cried the hangman, "see, his heart is in my hand, and yet Gregory is in his mouth!"

And this College, my dear brethren, how has it learned this lesson from Douay? You have only to lift your eyes. There, in the Douay window, is his figure on the right of St. Thomas of Canterbury. Here, in our east window, is his figure on the right of our own St. Edmund. Two of the greatest Archbishops of Canterbury! Who should be on their right hand if not the Founder of their See?

Year by year, for a hundred years and more, we have been faithful in this house to the tradition of Douay, and have kept St. Gregory's feast with a solemn Mass and Benediction. Therefore we have a special right to rejoice to-day, therefore we have a special confidence that St. Gregory to-day will look down on St. Edmund's and recognise in it the birth-place of priests who are to continue his own work—

who are to be missionaries for the Conversion of England.

It is a sad thing, but it is a true thing, that after thirteen hundred years this work has to be done all over again. The past hundred years have done much, they have laid the foundation, they have provided the machinery for the work ; but little or nothing as yet appears above the ground. The building is all to do. The land is covered with heresy and practical heathendom. To convert it back to the Church of Christ is a far more complicated and a more difficult matter than that first conversion. And yet this is the work we in our turn have to do. Clearly this house exists to train priests to do this work—and nothing else than this. Equally clearly the work must be done on the same principles as it was done before. Therefore we look to see what was the spirit of St. Gregory.

First it was a spirit of self-sacrifice and prayer. He gave himself up utterly to God, and therefore God, who is faithful, heard his prayers : “ Preserve me, O God, *because* I am hidden in thee ” (Ps. xv.).

Secondly, it was a spirit like that of St. Paul, it knew how to be “ all things to all men.” St. Gregory used the best of everything that lay around him. He inherited the imperial spirit of his Roman ancestors. He used it to rule the various provinces of the Church—and to make fresh conquests for Christ. The clear insight and calm judgment that form part of the imperial spirit saw things exactly as they were. Having grasped the situation, he took such human measures as were possible, and

left the rest to God with calm reliance and hope. Where toleration and concession were possible, there he was ready wisely to conciliate; when principle was involved he was inflexible. "You know me," he writes in one of his letters, "and that I tolerate a long while; but when I have once determined to bear no longer I go with joy against all dangers."¹

And lastly it was a spirit of wisdom. He was in fact a guide to men. In difficulties they turned to him, knowing they would get not empty words but living help. His influence was multiplied manifold by his written words; and his books and his letters have enriched all after ages. If we are to convert England, we, who are called by Christ to be the leaders and teachers of his people, must have something more than a sentimental piety to offer to a nation which is above all things practical. We must be men of learning, men of wisdom, able and ready to offer true counsel in the hour of trouble, not empty words. We must gain, by labour, by study, and by prayer, true science, not the philosophising or theorising of the East, but the practical wisdom of Rome. And this twin-gift of sanctity and learning is the gift we may well to-day ask of St. Gregory for us who bear or who are to bear the priesthood of Christ.

*O Doctor optime, Ecclesiæ Sanctæ lumen
Beate Gregori, divinæ legis amator
Deprecare pro nobis Filium Dei.*

Pray for us—pray for these thy sons who are

¹ Ep. ad Sabinianum Diaconum, iv. 47.

going out to the English nation, as Augustine and Mellitus and Laurence went at thy bidding, to lead this people out of the wrath of God, that with the angels they may sing Alleluia before the face of God.

Note.—All the foregoing references to St. Gregory's Letters are taken from the Maurist Edition, Paris, 1705.

APPENDIX I

ADDRESS ON THE OCCASION OF THE SACRILEGIOUS
ROBBERY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT,
ON MAUNDY THURSDAY 1799,

BY DR. POYNTER

(Then Vice-President, afterwards Bishop of Halia and Vicar
Apostolic of the London District).

“In the night between the 20th and 21st March 1799, some sacrilegious robbers broke into the chapel through the window of the sacristy and carried away the tabernacle with its Divine contents, plundering the sacristy of everything that had the appearance of gold or silver. In grief and consternation many of the professors, divines, &c., went in search of the lost treasure, thinking it might be thrown into some ditch. In the pond at the north-west corner of the meadow lying before the front of the New College . . . were discovered several small hosts floating on the surface of the water. The tabernacle was found sunk to the bottom, being filled with mud and a large stone. . . . The hosts contained in the Ciborium and Remonstrance, which the robbers had carried away, were found for the most part wrapped up in the corporal laid in the bottom of the tabernacle. . . . All this happened on Maundy Thursday. To make some reparation for this injury offered to the Blessed Sacrament on the very day of the commemoration of its institution, some prayers were said in honour of this mystery, and it was determined by the President that prayers should be annually said for that intention.”—*College Diary*, 1799.

Laudetur Sanctissimum Altaris Sacramentum.

DEAR children, you have deplored, no doubt, the most enormous insult which this morning was offered to your loving Saviour in the most holy

and adorable Sacrament. The sacred Body of Christ which now shines infinitely glorious at the right hand of the Father, which the angels covet to behold, purer than the purest ray of the sun, was in a most sacrilegious, outrageous manner covered with dirt and plunged to the bottom of a pond.

At the indignities in the Passion the rocks were rent, the earth trembled. Whose heart was not rent with grief? Who was not seized with a holy fear at the hearing of this? O ye angels! could you withhold your zeal from striking down the impious wretches who dared lay violent hands on your Lord? Oh, but you wait His orders! You were then trembling before Him adoring Him no less in the midst of that abominable treatment than you do on His throne of glory.

And the miserable authors of the horrid crime shall tremble at the last day before that very Body which they have so sacrilegiously profaned. And, oh! that such an insult should have been offered on the very day of the institution of this sacrament of love.

Oh, let me invite every Christian soul to come and repair this injury. As it is for our sakes that He instituted the Blessed Sacrament, that He here exposed Himself to all the injuries and affronts that are offered Him, we shall certainly be highly ungrateful if we do not endeavour to make some reparation. I hope you will all individually excite yourselves to the most feeling sentiments of sorrow and love to make Him some amends.

I think that some public reparation of His honour is likewise due. Come then, my dear friends, come the beloved spouses of Christ, come and unite with me in a short prayer to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

APPENDIX II

NEWSPAPER SUMMARY OF THE SERMON PREACHED AT THE
OPENING OF THE COLLEGE CHAPEL, MAY 20, 1853,

By H. E. CARDINAL WISEMAN,
ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER.

“But Samuel ministered before the face of the Lord; being a child girded with a linen ephod.”

FROM this type of the favoured Samuel chosen by God from among the people and trained in the sanctuary to become a great leader of His people, his Eminence drew a charming picture of the wisdom and constant practice of the Church in selecting her priests at an early age, training them like young saplings in the nursery of an ecclesiastical seminary, and enlarged much on the great characteristics of a true ecclesiastical education. Lest some of his audience might, perhaps, little sympathise on the occasion which had drawn them together; lest some, perchance, might feel inclined to think it a pity that such a large and noble building should be erected in a remote country district for a few students, and think it were better had it been in one of the many poor and populous districts which abound in the metropolis, his Eminence proceeded to insist on the great, the paramount importance of the chapel in an ecclesiastical College. It was

what the gallery of antiquities was to the student of art—the museum to the learner of science—for here were collected the objects which were to be fulfilled, the outward and inward senses of the priests. And if such a place were allowed to be plain, common, and by comparison mean, what an effect would it produce on the mind of the young seminarist! It was, indeed, a noble thought, and one which did honour to his most worthy predecessor (Bishop Griffiths), so well versed as he was in every portion of ecclesiastical science, to determine upon the erection of this beautiful structure, the dedication of which we had met that day to celebrate, and wherein he had desired that his body should be laid after death, where his heart had ever been during life. Henceforth, in this holy institution it would be manifest that God was in the first place honoured and adored, and for Him the best and noblest part of the building was set apart. What a corresponding effect this would have upon the education of those who would hereafter be entrusted with large and splendid churches, and the care of so many thousands of souls. The first ideas of their college chapel would inspire high and lofty ideas, and would lead to great and noble self-devotion. In this chapel the beautiful ceremonial of our holy Church would be fully and entirely carried out, in such a manner as to leave lasting impressions on the mind. For now there was a great fondness and attachment to ceremonial shown by our people, many of whom would detect and lament a deficiency in this score. Here everything

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