

CARDINAL MANNING

HENRY EDWARD MANNING, a distinguished English Roman Catholic prelate and pulpit orator, created Cardinal in 1875, was born at Totteridge, Hertfordshire, July 15, 1808, and died at Westminster, London, Jan. 14, 1892. He was educated at Harrow, and at Balliol College, Oxford, and in his university career showed himself to be a ready and effective speaker. His first design was to enter political life, but he afterwards decided to go into the Church, and after studying theology he took orders in the Established (Anglican) Church. In 1833, he became rector of Lavington, Sussex, receiving the preferment of the archdeaconry of Chichester meanwhile (in 1840). After Ward and Newman, who had taken part with him in the Tractarian movement, had entered the Roman communion, Manning was regarded as one of the leaders of the High Church party; but the decision in the famous "Gorham Case," regarding baptism, determined him to leave the Anglican Church, and in April, 1851, he was received into the Roman fold. After several years' residence at Rome, he was appointed rector of St. Mary's, Bayswater, London, and on the death of Cardinal Wiseman (in 1865), became archbishop of Westminster. Manning was a preacher of much eloquence, a learned theologian, and an acute and skillful controversialist. Besides being foremost in most Catholic movements in England, he was active in the interest of Christian socialism and an ardent supporter of the temperance cause, writing and lecturing much in its behalf. He was untiring in philanthropic labors, and was conspicuous in educational affairs as well as in all movements for social reform. In spite of the ascetic character of his mind, he exercised a broad charity in religious matters. His chief writings include "The Unity of the Church" (1842); "Sermons at Oxford" (1844); "The Grounds of Faith" (1852); "Sermons on Ecclesiastical Subjects" (1863); "The Temporal Power of the Pope" (1866); "England and Christendom" (1867); "The Infallible Church" (1875); "The Vatican Decrees in their Bearing on Civil Allegiance" (1875). In 1896, a "Life of Cardinal Manning," by E. S. Purcell, was published, the appearance of which, with its free comment on some incidents and periods in the distinguished prelate's career, provoked considerable discussion.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE CHURCH

"We give thanks unto God, who maketh us always to triumph in Christ Jesus, and manifesteth the odor of the knowledge of Him by us in every place. For we are a good odor of Christ unto God, both in them that are saved and in them that perish; in the one indeed an odor of life, in the other an odor of death unto death."

—2 Cor. ii, 14-16.

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SUCH was the confidence of the Apostle in the face of all that was most hostile, mighty, and triumphant in the judgment of this world. He was confident that through God his mission in the world was being accomplished, that the word of God was triumphing over all the power of men. They may well have said to him, "What is this triumph you speak of? If this be triumph, what is defeat? You were stoned the other day at Lystra; you were imprisoned at Philippi; you were scourged at Jerusalem; you were saved out of the hands of the people only by Roman soldiers; you were confounded by the philosophers at Athens; and you were refuted out of the holy Scriptures by the Jews of Berea. If this is triumph, you are welcome to it." Such, no doubt, was the lordly and confident language of men in the face of the apostles of Jesus Christ then, and such is the language of confidence with which the world looks on the Catholic Church at this hour. It counts it to be a comedy played out, a stale mediæval superstition, and a name that is trampled in the earth. In every age the Church has been militant and in warfare. It is under the same law of suffering which crucified its Divine Head. His throne was a cross, and his crown was of thorns. Nevertheless he triumphed, and he triumphs still, and shall triumph to the end. And so at this moment, in this nineteenth century, in the century of modern civilization, of light, of progress, of scientific affectation, the Catholic Church is derided. They say to us, "Look at the Catholic Church in Germany; look at it in Italy; the head of the Church dethroned; and not a spot on earth for the incarnation to set its foot upon. If this be triumph you are welcome to it." Our answer is: "Yes, even now we triumph always and in every place. The Catholic Church is triumphing now in America, and in Ire-

land, and in the colonies of the British empire; aye, and in the midst of the confusions in Spain, and in France through revolution after revolution, and in the furnace of infidelity; aye, and in Germany, in the midst of all that the might of man can do against it; and in Italy too, where the head of the Church is morally a prisoner, it is triumphing even now."

But how can I verify this assertion? It would be enough indeed to quote the words of the Apostle, but I hope to do more. The world esteems the triumph of the Church to be in wealth, power, glory, honor, public sway over empires and nations. There was a time indeed when the world laid these things at the feet of the apostles of Jesus Christ. There was a time when the Catholic Church and the Christian world knew how to sanctify the society of men; but there is this difference—the world then believed, and the world now is apostate. Nevertheless, there is a triumph in the Christian world and there is a triumph in the anti-Christian world; and what is it? It is that the Church in every age and in every condition, and in the midst of all antagonists, fulfils its mission and accomplishes its work, and no power of man can hinder it. Men may, as we shall see hereafter, to their own destruction, resist the mission of the Church, but its work will be accomplished nevertheless, and accomplished even in them; and its work will be a good odor of Christ unto God both in those that are saved and in those that perish. The world has neither tests nor measures by which to understand what the mission and the work of the Church are; but they who see by the light of faith have both. Let us examine, then, what is its mission, what is its work, and how it is fulfilled.

1. First of all, the mission of the Church among men is this—to be a witness for God, and for the incarnation of God in the face of the world. Our Divine Lord said of himself:

"For this was I born, and for this came I into the world, that I should give testimony unto the truth." As it was with him, so it is with his Church; and therefore he said to his apostles: "You shall be witnesses unto me," and St. John said: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands handled, of the word of life; for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and do bear witness, and declare unto you, the life eternal which was with the Father, and hath appeared unto us; that is to say, the manifestation of God in the flesh, the incarnation of the Son of God." The Church was the witness of this divine fact to the world, and it is witness to this hour. I may say it is an eye-witness. It was eye-witness of what it declares. It was an ear-witness of what it affirms. I may say in truth that the Church of God, which testifies at this hour, saw the Son of God, and heard his words, and was witness of his miracles. So St. Peter expressly declares, speaking of his transfiguration: "We have not, by artificial fables, made known to you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ; but we were eye-witnesses of his greatness. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, this voice coming down to him from the excellent glory: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And this voice we heard brought from heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount." More than this: it was a witness of the day of Pentecost, and upon it the Holy Ghost descended. It heard the sound of the mighty wind and it saw the tongues of fire. The Church therefore testifies at this day as an ear-witness and an eye-witness of the divine facts which it declares. And how can this be said? Because that which the apostles saw

and heard they delivered to others who believed in them upon a full test and knowledge of their truth, and those who received their testimony held it as a sacred trust and declared it to those who came after. From age to age the testimony of the apostles has descended unbroken. The intrinsic certainty of their witness, resting on their own eye-witness and ear-witness of the facts, has not diminished by a shade, jot, or tittle in the lapse of time, and the external evidence of that fact has multiplied and extended throughout all time and throughout the world. Therefore the testimony of the apostles to these divine realities and truths is as living and fresh at this day as it was in the beginning. Then twelve men testified; now the nations of the world, united in one body by faith and by baptism, take up and perpetuate that testimony. And part of that testimony is this—that when the Son of God ascended into heaven, as they saw him ascend, he fulfilled his promise that he would send the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Ghost, to abide with them forever; that when one Divine Teacher had gone up to his Father's throne, another should come in his stead; that the world should never be without a divine person and a divine teacher in the midst of it; and that the Spirit of Truth by which they were united to their Divine Head in heaven should unite them also to each other as his members in one mystical body, and should form to himself a dwelling-place in which to abide forever. As the soul abides in the body of the man, so the Holy Ghost abides in the body of the Church. It is the sanctuary in which he dwells; the organ by which he speaks, so that the words of our Divine Lord are fulfilled to the very letter—"He that heareth you heareth me"; for the voice of the head and that of the body, as St. Augustine says, are one and the same voice. As they make one moral person, so their

voice is identical, and the assistance of the Holy Spirit keeps the voice of the Church always in perfect harmony with the voice of its Divine Head, fulfilling the promise of the Lord by his prophet: "My spirit which is upon thee and my word which I put in thy mouth, shall never depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed from this time and forever." Thus, then, the mission of the Church is fulfilled always; whether the world believe or disbelieve, whether it gainsay or assent, it matters not; the testimony of the Church forever triumphs in every place.

2. Another part of the mission of the Church is this—to teach the doctrines of Jesus Christ in the midst of all the controversies and contradictions of men. In the face of all the errors and heresies of men there is one Divine Teacher perpetually declaring the same immutable truth. In the clamor and confusion of the human voices of philosophers and human guides, of the scribes and pharisees of the new laws, there is one Divine Voice—articulate, clear, and piercing—which cleaves through all the confusion, and is to be heard above the clamor of men and of nations—the voice of that one holy, Catholic, and Roman Church, spreading from the sunrise to the sunset, immutable in its doctrine, teaching the same truths identically in every place, and abiding always the same unchanging teacher in every age. This is a fact legible in human history. I need not offer proof of it from histories written by ourselves; it is proved by histories and controversies of those who are most opposed to us. There is an accusation which is repeated from age to age against the Catholic and Roman Church; and what is it? That it always persists in its old errors. I accept the accusation. Its persistence proves its immutability, and that which they account

error we know to be the doctrine of Jesus Christ; because, as I have already shown from the word of God, neither can the Catholic Church ever err in believing, nor can the Catholic Church err in teaching. These are two impossibilities, and they descend from one and the same divine truth. God, the Holy Ghost, abiding forever in the mystical body of Christ, illuminates the whole body of the faithful from the time of their baptism. From the time that the graces of faith, hope, and charity are infused into their souls, they are illuminated with the light of faith as the world is illuminated by the splendor of the sun at noonday; and the faithful throughout the world continue passively in their persistence in that one baptismal faith wherewith they were enlightened from their earliest consciousness. And further, they can never err in believing, because the Church which teaches them can never err in teaching. The episcopate throughout the world, which is the college of the apostles multiplied and expanded among all nations, has always the assistance of the Spirit of Truth to guide and preserve it, so that the errors of men and infirmities of our intellect never prevail over the light of faith by which the whole Episcopate of the Church is sustained in the revelation of the day of Pentecost. And more than this: nineteen general councils, from the first which declared the coequality and consubstantiality of the Son with the Father and the Holy Ghost, down to the last which declared the infallibility of the vicar of Jesus Christ,—those nineteen councils have been the organ of the Holy Ghost, preserving the truth in all ages; and the pontiffs, two hundred and fifty-seven in number, have also been guided and assisted by the same Spirit of Truth; so that no doctrine of faith and morals from their hand and from their lips has been out of harmony with the revelation of Jesus Christ. For these reasons the Church

is fulfilling its mission, always and in every place, and it can say in every age, with a divine certainty of knowledge and with a divine authority of teaching: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us."

3. Once more, and lastly: there is another part of the mission of the Church which never fails, and is never baffled—and that is, that the Church judges between the truth of God and the errors of men, and gives decision with divine certainty what is truth, what is falsehood, what is light, and what is darkness. Here again the world, in the confusion of its discordant witnesses, bears testimony to our truth. The world disclaims altogether the presence of any divine teacher in the midst of us. It derides the very notion. There is not a sect or a communion, or a so-called church, which lays claim to this divine guidance. They say infallibility exists nowhere but in God. As the Pharisees said: "Who can forgive sins but God only?" thereby acknowledging the divinity of him who forgave the palsied man. And while they say: "We have no infallibility in us; we do not claim it; we deny its existence on the face of the earth," the one Teacher, who never varies in his voice, says: "He that heareth me heareth him that sent me." It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and unto us that we should claim that infallibility, and we cite you before the tribunal of God to answer for your denial of that truth. We say further that no man knows that any revelation was ever made to man except through our testimony. You never saw the Word made flesh, you nor your forefathers; and you have no unbroken succession of witnesses who trace upward these eighteen hundred years to the day when the Holy Ghost descended with wind and fire; you are not in contact with the original revelation of God. How can you rise up and say: "This was revealed upwards of

eighteen hundred years ago," when you have no proof to give, except that which you borrow from me, that the Son of God ever came into the world? You take my witness for the fact of Christianity, and you then contradict me when I teach you what the doctrines of Christianity are. And if men appeal to the Scriptures, our answer is the same. How do you know the Scriptures were ever written? How can you prove that there ever was a book called the Word of God? You had it from me; you snatched it out of my hand, and you then read it and interpret it in contradiction to my teaching. How do you know that there were four greater prophets and twelve less in the Old Testament; that there are four evangelists and fourteen epistles of St. Paul in the New? Who told you all these things? You had them all from me—from me alone, to whom these Scriptures were committed in custody and in guardianship; from me, who preserved and handed them on to this day. You, who are denying the inspiration of this book and of that, of this text and of that text, and who are gnawing away, as a moth fretteth a garment, the whole written word of God, you rise up and tell us: "This is the meaning of the holy Scriptures," and you reject the holy Catholic faith.

Dear brethren, it needs great patience to hear these things; nevertheless the judge is always calm and patient while he is fulfilling his work among men, and that because it is a grave thing to be the odor of life unto life and of death unto death to the eternal souls of men. And when men appeal to antiquity and tell us that "this is not the primitive tradition," the Church answers: Were you ever in antiquity, or any one that belongs to you? I was there, and as a perpetual witness antiquity is to me nothing but my early days. Antiquity exists in my consciousness to this hour, as men grown

to riper years remember their childhood. Men of the world know that the cotemporaneous interpretation of a law is the most authentic and certain interpretation. But I have the cotemporaneous interpretation of holy Scripture; and more than this, men who practise before human tribunals know that the continuous usage of a country is the interpretation of its laws written and unwritten. But I have the cotemporaneous and the continuous usage of the Church of God. The seven sacraments are institutions of Jesus Christ and every one of them interprets a cluster of truths. The existence of the Church itself is an interpretation of the words: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The jurisdiction that I have over the world, which the hearts of men recognize and to which their consciences respond, is the interpretation of the words: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

But lastly there is another appeal which men make in this day. We are now told that scientific history is the test of truth; and I saw the other day in a document having great pretension from a certain body of men who are troubling Germany and attempting to trouble even England with the name of Old Catholics, that the way to know the pure faith of Jesus Christ is to interpret history by science. Alas, as I said before, the world is full of pretensions to science; but those who claim to be Catholics, and who yet appeal from the living voice of the Catholic Church to any other tribunal whatsoever, are all of them identical in their principle, and that principle is heresy. Luther appealed from the voice of the Catholic Church to Scripture, and thereby became a heretic. There are others who appeal to antiquity, and the