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The Fool Said in His Heart: "There is no God."

"I believe in no life beyond the grave, but I would tell the man who would sap my poor old mother's faith in this one hope of her declining days." Thus spoke a fine specimen of manhood to a company of infidels with whom he was in the habit of consorting. By some method of reasoning he had convinced himself that there was neither a God nor a hereafter, but the pitiful state of mind in which he found himself made him shrink with horror from the thought of finding the one he most loved and revered on earth, in a similar plight. "O, if there be no God" human hearts have cried out in their anguish, "let us create one,"—so utterly helpless do they feel without some great controlling principle, so utterly purposeless appears their lives. "Why are we here?" they would say, "what does it all mean? Why endure this cycle of physical and mental pain, this meeting but to part again, this joy whose course is attended with tears, this round of high ambitious ending in the ashes of disappointment, this sowing of hope and reaping of despair, in a word this wretched mockery known as 'life'?" Life? If this is all there be of it, it is not life, in the way we understand that beautiful word. Rather is it a living death—death without death's great privilege—oblivion.

The great heart of humanity cries aloud for God—and perhaps there is no greater witness to His eternal existence than this yearning of the creatures of His fashioning to feel they have Him near. While conscious of the majesty of their own being, a being unmeasurably superior to any living or material form in the world or surrounding universe, they are supremely conscious that they are but clay in the hands of an eternal potter. Let this conviction be obscured and the world knows so much peace and happiness the less. But, take it away and you let loose what is understood by the "bounds of hell."

Once let a man be convinced that God and his own immortal soul are all myths, and you toll the death knell of society, law, order, virtue and peace. The self-sufficient infidel, he too cries out in defence of his own miserable carcass "If there be no God, let us create one." Yes, indeed, had I would it go with him, and the proud ones of this world if humanity were ever sunk to his vacuous state of mind.

He glories in his god of "science" that God who makes greater demands on his faith than ever the living God makes upon ours. He is a shuttlecock in the hands of his god. What he accepts to-day as demonstrated and proved, he is called upon to supplant to-morrow as discredited. He is reduced to the indignity and he revels in it, of putting himself on the level of brute beasts and inert matter. He points with pride to apes as ancestors, and apostrophizes that glorious ancestry inviting it to rejoice with him for science has pointed out in these latter days their ultimate common origin, the mighty atom—that came from nowhere. A few short years, no doubt, and science will locate the region of Nowhere.

We would hold no brief against science, for rightly approached and treated, it can have nothing to reveal to men but what must redound to the greater honor and glory of God; but for the hire-brained degenerates, who because they wish it, would fain prove

the eternity of matter rather than acknowledge an eternal living God, we have a feeling more akin to loathing than pity.

It is hard to understand men who glory in degrading their own nature. It is still harder to forgive them.

Listen to the parrot cries: "Is there a God?" "Is there such a place as heaven or hell?" "Has man a soul?"

Well, (to paraphrase the words of a great thinker) it is eminently reasonable to believe in all these things, for if there be a God and you have an immortal soul it will make a great deal of difference to you if you have lived ill instead of well. Remember too, you will have believed in excellent company.

"Excellent company." Aye, there's the rub, for the infidel or agnostic.

Assistant-Rulers of the Church.

In our last issue we had occasion to refer to a dispute between a priest and his bishop, which case has been carried by the former to Rome for final adjudication. This suggests a few thoughts about the sacred congregation to which the dispute has been referred and the Roman Curia, or governing body of the church, generally.

"The Congregation of Bishops and Regulars" is a court of appeal to which secular priests or religious orders refer the decisions of the bishops with respect to them. Like all other Roman congregations it moves slowly perhaps, but surely, and safely. If beaten here the contestant may rest assured that he came into court with a bad case. Justice, wisdom, experience, diplomacy have all been trained on to the dispute, and if the final decision be adverse, the knowledge of this fact should soften the mortification of defeat.

The Sovereign Pontiff receives invaluable aid in the government of the church in this way, decentralizing the administrative functions throughout the congregations composing the Curia. It would be beyond the power of mortal to hold more than the leading threads of the vast organization known as the Catholic church. All matters however of vital importance come under the personal notice of the holy Father, and require his fiat.

Pope Sixtus V created fifteen congregations but we can name only the most important of these, with a brief note as to their peculiar duties.

The Congregation of the Propaganda attends to the spreading of the faith throughout the world. It is divided into the Latin and the oriental branches. It educates missionaries and supplies them with liturgical and other works.

The Congregation of Rites regulates the celebration of the divine offices, and settles all questions as to the canonization of saints. The "devils advocate" is a member of this congregation, and a useful one to boot.

The Congregation of the Council receives reports of Provincial Councils and Bishops when visiting "the tombs of the apostles" and the supreme pontiff. It interprets except on matters of faith, the decrees of the Council of Trent. It reports on flaws in the marriage tie.

The Congregation of the Index concentrates its wisdom on literature suitable for christian eyes. A very important, very sagacious, very practical, but villainously misrepresented body of men.

The Congregation of Studies has eminent laymen on its roll, and watches over the secular and ecclesiastical studies prosecuted in Catholic universities. It confers degrees.

The Sacra Penitentiaria is the supreme tribunal for the remission of sins to which the jurisdiction of the ordinary confessor does not apply.

We have not space to refer to any more of these congregations now, but sufficient have been mentioned to give one some idea (if we may use such an illustration) of the immensity of the machine of which they are the driving wheels, under the controlling, unerring hand of the successor of St. Peter.

Excursion to Buffalo and Niagara Falls on Thanksgiving Day.

The New York Central and West Shore Railroads on Thanksgiving day Nov. 26th, will offer excursion tickets to either Buffalo or Niagara Falls at rate of \$1.25, good going and returning on all regular trains except the limited.

Does Protestantism Ensure Prosperity?

The Liverpool Catholic Times has been moralizing over the croakings of Balfour and Chamberlain who assert that England's commercial downfall is at hand. If this be so, and it may be, says the Times, what becomes of the argument that to her Protestantism, is due England's prosperity? Has her Protestantism then failed, or was her prosperity as a fact ever traceable to this cause? May not her own coal-fields and other natural advantages have had something to do with her unique material success? The Times is of opinion, and we quite concur, that they have had everything. While the world was asleep England awoke to the potentialities within her, and with an eye to future business, set off on a voyage round the globe, annexing all the territory she could conveniently lay hands upon thus assuring for herself certain markets for her products. As time went on however, other European countries—some of them not Protestant—and this country of America discovered that the "right tight little island" need have no monopoly of the world's trade, and one after another they entered the competition with what results we all know. Tariffs may or may not avert England's evil day—for the part she has played in the interests of civilization, let us hope they may—but her Protestantism is likely to stand her in poor stead. The stock argument of the Protestant lecturer and bigot is gone; Balfour and Chamberlain are selling some unpalatable truths. This will be a galling revelation to thousands in England, for many had really come to believe that the country's prosperity was due solely to the sterling character of her Protestant faith.

These deluded people never stop to ask themselves the cause of all the poverty and misery standing side by side with the wealth of England. Catholic countries may not be, are not, so materialistic in their aims as Protestant, but poverty is no more incidental to Catholicism than prosperity to Protestantism. We are not gloating over England's impending commercial humiliation, but we do rejoice that the fool's paradise in which so many Englishmen have been living on the question of her present brand of christianity, has been exploded as a myth.

Weekly Church Calendar.

Sunday November 22—Gospel, St. Matt. xxiv. 15-35. St. Cecilia, virgin and martyr.
 Monday 23—St. Clement I., pope and martyr.
 Tuesday 24—St. John of the Cross, confessor.
 Wednesday 25—St. Catharine, virgin and martyr.
 Thursday 26—St. Peter of Alexander, bishop and martyr.
 Friday 27—St. Maximus, bishop.
 Saturday 28—St. James of La Marca, confessor.

\$10 Thanksgiving Excursion

On Nov. 25th, the New York Central will sell excursion tickets to Boston, Springfield, Palmer, Worcester and South Framingham at the low rate of \$10 for the round trip; tickets good going Wednesday, Nov. 25th, good returning on or before Saturday, Dec. 6th, on regular except limited trains No. 6, 19, 22, 25, 26, 50 and 51. Stop over on the going trip allowed on Boston tickets at points named above; but such tickets must be used to Boston for validation before commencing return journey.

This excursion affords a splendid opportunity to spend Thanksgiving day with friends in New England. Boston is considered one of the most interesting cities in America; it is the objective point to tourists visiting this country. The equipment of the New York Central is of the highest standard and it is the route of the fastest trains in the world.

Call at New York Central office, 20 State St. for tickets, time of trains, space in parlor or sleeping cars.

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SPECIALS FOR NEXT WEEK:

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- Pure Maple Syrup.
- This is the season of all the year which incessantly promotes the desire for this delicacy on the table. Quality Guaranteed the best in the world. Gallon Tins 80c, quart bottles, 20c, pint bottles 12c.
- New Dried Fruits—
- Apricots.....13c Peaches.....10c Prunes, largest size.....12c
- Mince Meat, 8c; makes pies like Mother used to make.

Great was our gratification at meeting so many new and expectant faces last week. For the satisfaction expressed tells us we are on the right road to the proper service of the Dinner Table.

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Five Minute Sermon

The Abomination of Desolation.

One object of this Gospel was to advise Christ's followers among the Jews to escape the evils that were to come over Jerusalem, and the other was to warn Christians who will be living at the end of the world to be prepared for the great desolation that will precede His second coming. When He will come to judge the living and the dead.

In regard to Christians Christ spoke of that abomination which will be caused by all sorts of crimes, and which, like a mighty torrent, will overflow the earth in the days of Antichrist, who will appear at the end of the world.

Christ counsels Christians to flee from the general corruption that will reign supreme with Antichrist, even at the cost of what is most dear to them on this earth, preferring to lose all temporal things rather than lose their souls and forfeit the imperishable goods of heaven.

Considering how all the predictions in regard to Jerusalem were most minutely fulfilled, we understand why Jesus Christ said that heaven and earth shall pass away, but that His words shall not pass away. Moreover, let us learn to fear the dreadful punishments of the anger of God, to do penance for our sins, to avoid the occasions of sin, and to prepare ourselves for the day of judgment, of which the Gospel speaks, and which was explained on the first Sunday of Advent.

The way of the cross is the path of the predestinate, the way of the saints, the royal road, the king's highway. You will find that the mere resolve not to be useless and the honest desire to help other people will, in the quickest and most delicate ways, also improve yourself.

Let us be men with men and always children before God, for in His eyes we are but children. Old age itself in presence of eternity is but the first moment of a morning.



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Is the steel well tempered, the wood-work (handles and the like) perfect—in brief, is it a good tool? is a question every wideawake mechanic has a perfect right to ask as to any tool he contemplates purchasing. All we have to say in this connection is that we will stand by any goods we recommend. If they don't prove satisfactory, back they go to the manufacturer.

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