

Messenger and Visitor

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An Archbishop's Mandate.

A considerable sensation has been caused by a pastoral instruction supported by a mandate recently issued by Archbishop Cleary, of Kingston, Ont., having reference to the attendance of Roman Catholics at Protestant religious services, and especially at marriages and funerals. The particular incident which has stirred the Archbishop to utter the strongly condemnatory language which the instruction and mandate contain, was the participation as bridesmaid of a somewhat prominent Roman Catholic lady, of Kingston, in a marriage ceremony which recently took place in a Protestant church. On this conduct the Archbishop pronounces the severest churchly censure. Having affirmed that, by assisting at a non-Catholic marriage service, a Catholic "dishonors the holy Redeemer of the world who is the author of every sacrament and of all grace," it is added: "It is still more deplorable and more heinously criminal before God and men, that a Catholic lady should not merely assist as a spectator of such a scene, but should dress herself up as one of the actresses in the drama, and parade herself on the platform as one of the principal performers." The mandate with which the Archbishop concludes is as follows:

"Wherefore, having invoked that Almighty God, we hereby declare, with all the authority of the church vested in us, as Archbishop of Kingston and your chief pastor, that any Catholic, in our metropolitan city or diocese, who shall henceforth presume to enter any non-Catholic edifice to assist at what is termed 'a marriage service,' or 'a service for the dead,' even though he should not take active part in the performance, renders himself guilty of mortal sin, by dishonoring the religion of his baptism, and defying the laws of holy church, and giving public scandal before society, and we furthermore reserve to ourselves alone the power to absolve from his heinous crime."

It is somewhat interesting and quite instructive to have these explicit utterances as to the light in which the religious services of Protestants are regarded by so distinguished a Roman Catholic prelate as the Archbishop of Kingston. It is, it seems, a "heinous crime," for a Roman Catholic even to be present at the funeral services of a friend or neighbor, if conducted by a Protestant minister or in a Protestant church. One cannot be surprised to hear that the spirit in which the mandate of Mgr. Cleary is received by some members of his extensive flock is not exactly one of docile acquiescence in the infallibility of the prelate's instruction, or that "politicians shake their heads" over this remarkable deliverance. It has been customary, we believe, in Canada, when any man who had held an eminent position in public affairs has passed away, for men of all shades of religious belief to attend his funeral and to be present at the religious exercises. This at least was true when the funeral of Premier Sir John Thompson occurred a few years ago in Halifax. But it is made clear that if the death of any non-Catholic in public life—say Sir Oliver Mowatt—should now occur—the present premier of Canada and his co-religionists could not be present at the religious services which would be held in connection with his funeral, without incurring "mortal sin" and making themselves guilty of "heinous crime" in the eyes of their clergy. This at least is Archbishop Cleary's doctrine, and doubtless he is orthodox in his views and speaks, as he declares, "in the full authority of the church" vested in him. But there are in Canada, we fancy, a good many Roman Catholics who will not very kindly take that kind of a bit into their mouths and hear with docile submission the cracking of the prelatial whip about their ears.

The Cleary mandate has attracted attention in the United States, as well as in Canada. The newspapers have been publishing interviews on the subject with R. C. clergymen of some prominence in New York, Chicago and Boston. The gist of what these gentlemen have to say appears to be this: that Archbishop Cleary's mandate, though local in application, is quite in accordance with Roman Catholic teaching, but that in view of the relations of Catholics and non-Catholics in the United States, it is not considered expedient to put forth this teaching as explicitly as Mgr. Cleary has thought good to do in Canada. One priest in Chicago intimated that the practice of many Roman Catholics in that city was not at all in harmony with the Cleary mandate and declared that such an utterance was most illiberal for this enlightened age. This outspoken priest, it may be taken for granted, has no immediate expectation of succeeding to a bishopric; if he had he might be more discreet in his language. It appears, however, that what seems good in the eyes of the Canadian Archbishop is not regarded by prelates of the United States as a policy which can prudently be adopted in the great Roman Catholic centres in that country. It is just possible that Canadian prelates will discover after a time that

"The thoughts of men are widened
With the process of the suns,"
and that it may no longer be expedient, even in Canada, to set forth so offensively, laws or regulations of the church founded on the assumption that the Roman hierarchy is the purveyor of all divine grace to the people, and that for a Roman Catholic to enter a place where men are calling upon God in the sincerity and simplicity of New Testament worship is to be guilty of a heinous crime, a mortal sin.

Salvation Through Shipwreck.

In the Bible lesson for the current week Paul and his 275 companions in travel, whose lives in fulfillment of the Lord's promise to Paul had all been saved, find themselves upon the island called Melita, (the modern Malta) and among a people who are called barbarians. It is not, however, necessarily implied that the islanders were what we should call a barbarous or savage people, but rather that they were not Greek or Roman in language or race. These people are believed to have been of Carthaginian origin. They were of course heathen in their religion, knowing nothing of God as revealed in the sacred writings of the Jews, and strangers to the faith and the hope of Israel. Such religious ideas as they had were darkened with ignorance and superstition, but the narrative brings out certain general traits of their character, which it is pleasing and instructive to notice. Their conduct exhibits the grace of human kindness. They received this great company of shipwrecked men—foreigners and quite unknown to them as they were—with kindly hospitality, and did what they could to alleviate their distress. Then, again, the way in which these simple people regarded the incident of the viper fastening upon Paul's hand indicates also a sense of justice, and a belief that a divine judgment will overtake the evil-doer. In these traits there appear some faint reflection at least of the holy principles of human brotherhood and the divine government—a sense of obligation to be kind toward men and to be just toward God. The doctrine of human depravity has sometimes been so set forth as to seem almost to obliterate the distinction between the unregenerate man and a fiend incarnate. But we ought not to forget that something of the divine image remains in humanity in its most degraded conditions, making possible for man the gospel which has been made actual in Jesus Christ. The possibility on the human side and the potency on the Divine side results, through faith, in glorious salvation for what are apparently the most hopeless races. We need on the one hand to have faith in the gospel as the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, and, on the other hand, faith in the capacity of all conditions of men to believe and to be saved. Humanity is not so utterly shipwrecked as to be beyond hope of salvation.

It should be highly instructive for us to follow such a man as Paul through the strange incidents

of his chequered experience, as the incidents occur in the narrative. It was not an easy, luxurious life that the apostle lived. On the contrary it was full of labor, hardship, affliction, persecution. It had in it a great deal of that from which men are wont to pray most sincerely and earnestly to be delivered. We sometimes ask ourselves in reference to our own or others' experience, why is there so much of labor, pain and trouble in the experience of God's children? Why is there so much of adversity, and why, when we were about to enter into a place of larger enjoyment and usefulness, has the door of opportunity been shut in our face? Perhaps the survey we are getting of Paul's life may help us in a measure with these vexing problems. No man had more adverse things to contend with than he. His life seems not only full of toil and peril and pain, but sadly broken up by wearying delays and disappointments, which must have sorely taxed his faith and patience. To a worldly wise man considering Paul's condition where our lesson finds him, it might seem doubtful that he was a shipwrecked man in more than a literal sense. But who can doubt now that the story and the influence of his life are not the more rather than the less complete because of his adversities? In spite of all—all the labor, the peril and persecution, the hardship and affliction, the enmity of adversaries, the falsity or fickleness of those he counted friends, the dark providences, the wearisome imprisonments, the cruel death at last, in spite of all, Paul's life was not a broken, fruitless thing, a disappointment to himself, a failure and futility so far as others were concerned. Far from that, it was a life full of most noble service, of high satisfaction and holy fellowship—a life not of defeat but of glorious victory. Paul, we may be sure, never had any question as to whether or not life was worth living, for his life was linked by faith to the Son of God, and he sought and found completeness, not in the broken things of earth, but in the eternal things of heaven. Of his afflictions Paul was indeed not insensible. The thorns that pierced him he keenly felt. The adversities by which he was beset tried his soul. His life might seem like that of a sheep devoted to the slaughter—as a life nourished only to be destroyed. But the meaning of it all was that Paul not defeat, futility; rather it was victory and more than victory, it was the grandest completeness the highest result to which human life could attain. For it meant eternal fellowship with God in His love, His purpose, His glory. The glory of the gospel is that it means for every soul which is obedient to its word, the same high fellowship, the same sense of completeness and of victory in God that filled and energized with unconquerable strength the soul of Paul.

Editorial Notes.

—The old Congregational church of Braintree, Mass., can boast a record as to long pastorates which probably is not equalled, if approximated, by any other church on the continent. It is stated that the Rev. Samuel Niles was pastor of the church fifty-two years—never missing more than two Sabbaths by ill-health during the whole term. The Rev. Mr. Wells was pastor for fifty-one years and was succeeded by Rev. Dr. Storrs (father of Rev. Dr. R. S. Storrs of Brooklyn) who was pastor fifty-three years. Thus the three successive pastorates lasted one hundred and fifty-six years.

—Dr. Goldwin Smith, in a characteristically pessimistic deliverance of recent date, gave utterance to the burden of his forebodings by saying, "I sometimes think that I shall live to see the last horse, the last poet and the last woman;" upon which the editor of the British Weekly remarks: "No doubt it is a strong consolation to Mr. Smith, under these melancholy circumstances that he is by no means likely to see the last ass"—a neat bit of sarcasm which all the world is enjoying at the distinguished pessimist's expense.

—Justice Winsor, whose death was recently announced, had been for twenty years Librarian of Harvard University, and in that connection was very widely known. Besides being deeply versed in the principles and the details of library work, Mr. Winsor was a scholar of large attainments and

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