

Not Peace but a Sword.

What a horrid thing caste is! What a masterpiece of the devil! How cruel and relentless! Surely they that are in its shackles are very slaves, and its bondage throws Egyptian bondage into the shade. It must be difficult for you in the home land to realize just the cruel rage of this monster, when one whom Christ has called, attempts to get out of its clutches. The Hindu may lie, steal, blaspheme, commit adultery, etc., *ad libitum*, and his religious standing is as a rule untouched. He may do all these and yet be a "good Hindu." But let him touch a man of another caste, let him eat or drink with someone of another caste, and his religion is gone in a moment. He must be excommunicated forthwith. Excommunication from caste, with all the disabilities that are involved, is something that Hindus dread far more than they do the woes of that eternal fire into which Satan and all his servants shall be cast. But the devil never roars so furiously and gnashes his teeth so fiercely as when the cause of breaking caste is that the person wants to follow Christ. God said to old Pharaoh: "Let my people go." Pharaoh replies: "They shall not go." His desperate attempt to keep God's people in Egypt is a striking illustration of the struggle that takes place in Hinduism when God says "Let my people go." We are again and again reminded of the words of Christ: "I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Let us see how this was illustrated the other day in the case of a young man baptized here. His name is Nursimulu; his caste, the "Shepherd Caste." He has been attending the mission day school here for some time and has come to know of Christ as his Saviour. Frequently he has asked Mr. Morse for baptism, but as he was a minor, and as it is a serious matter to baptize one under 18 years of age, Mr. Morse has felt it wise to postpone his baptism. Acting upon legal advice, Mr. Morse at last decided to receive the lad. He is 16 years old and it seems that if one is old enough to earn his own living and appears to be independent enough to choose for himself, the Court will allow him to make his own choice in the matter of religion even though a minor. It was Sunday morning! The sun was rising out of the calm bosom of the beautiful Bay of Bengal, announcing the arrival of a new day. It was indeed a new day for at least one young man. It was in the garden! The baptistry is there. The assembled congregation was small—only a few native Christians and two or three of us missionaries. It was not known to any but ourselves that this lad would be baptized. Even the servants must not know for the news will surely get out and his relatives will thwart our purpose. The Compound gates are all locked in case of disturbance. The young man could not even be brought before the church and publicly accepted as a candidate for membership "after baptism," according to the "rule and practice" of Baptist churches. Nursimulu was glad to take the step, though perhaps he did not realize what a fuss would be made over it. After the baptism we gathered in the school house for the preaching service. Fearing a disturbance this room was used rather than the Chapel which is outside the Mission Compound. The Lord's Supper was also administered at the close of the preaching service, and if Nursimulu's baptism had not broken his caste, his eating with us at the Lord's table would effectually do so. Soon the gathering crowd just outside the gate indicated that the news had reached Nursimulu's people. The street was thronged, and we found it necessary to guard the gate lest they break it down. Conspicuous in the crowd was the poor old mother. She was nearly crazy with grief and rage. First putting the palms of her hands together and pointing the finger tips toward the sky she prayed to her heathen god for help. Alas, it was like the worshippers of Baal at Mt. Carmel. Her ejaculations were: "Oh Narayana! Oh Narayana!! Then she shook her long bony finger at us and gave us a good cursing, in the name of some of her deities. The poor soul wrung her hands in grief and beat her breast as if in an agony of despair. She kept exclaiming: "I shall surely jump into a well!" If her boy had been seized by a legion of devils from the "Pit," and been cast into the seething caldron where the "smoke of their torment ascendeth forever and forever," she could hardly have felt worse. What awful thing had this boy done? What great sin had he committed? What terrible calamity had befallen him? He had simply found the best friend that man ever knew, and was only seeking to follow the meek and lowly Jesus, Jesus! What a horrid name! Better far become a leper with all his loathsome foulness, than become a Christian! Better far become an opium sot with all the physical, mental, and spiritual, emaciation and idiocy that this means! Better grovel in the gutter, a wretched drunkard, dreaded and loathed by your wife and children, than to be a Christian! Aye better become debauched and befouled by a life of open vice and shame, than to join the despised and hated followers of the crucified Jesus! Better be drowned in the lake of fire and brimstone, a thousand times better, than to turn Christian! So it would seem! How they hate God's dear son! But to

go on with my story. Nursimulu stood upon the school house veranda and saw his mother's frantic gestures, and his brother's beckoning appeal. Why not go down and talk with them? Simply because they will beat him, and carry him off to put him to some dreadful test, to see if they cannot make him recant and deny the Lord whom he a few hours before publicly professed to love. As he does not show any disposition to go to them the brothers look defiant, and shake their fists ominously. We sent for the police to disperse the crowd. They too hate this Jesus and would gladly see us whipped out of the town. But they are afraid to neglect their duty. The policemen take the old mother by her arms and drag her away. She tries to break away from their grip, and finally sits right down upon the ground, wailing piteously. Soon the people have been dispersed by the police and the angry relatives have gone home. But Nursimulu looks troubled. Does he think his mother will carry out her threat? Possibly not but he does not know just what all those threats involve. It seems as if the sun that rose so gloriously for him in the morning has now become hidden, and the thick black thunder-clouds have gathered about his head. It may burst in a storm of persecution and he trembles as he thinks of what it all may mean. He is afraid to stay away from his relatives and equally afraid to go near them. Possibly his heart has failed him as he thinks of his mother's tears and her broken heart. At any rate he decided to go and see them, even though we advised him to stay with us at least for a time until their anger had cooled off a little. In the evening after dark he went home. That was about three weeks ago. Since then he has not come near us. We hear that his "big brother" beat him. Of course they are hindering him from coming back. We can only pray for him and leave him in the Lord's hand remembering what the Apostle says: "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." We shall watch Nursimulu's case with interest; and will you not join us in praying for him that he may be kept and that he may be one of those of whom the Lord said: "They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." W. V. HIGGINS.
Bimlipatam, May 17th.

Our Pulpit.

Truth.

RYR. F. HORTON, D. D.

"No lie is of the truth." I John II: 51.

At first that sounds too obvious a remark to be worth making. But when you come to reflect you find that it is most difficult for us, even for religious people, to grasp the fact that no lie is of the truth, but that every lie comes from the Devil, the father of lies, and is a subtle poison in the spirit of man. To be true and speak the truth, is in this world so difficult that we are always trying to persuade ourselves that it is impossible, and then to cover our defeats with a theory that is not necessary. The shifty conscience of Society establishes a difference between white lies and black lies, and it has not observation enough to notice that every one who tells the one tells the other too. The Catholic conscience distinguishes between lies that are a mortal sin and lies that are only a venial sin, as if some came from the father of lies and others came, not exactly from the Father of Light, but from some intermediate region, inhabited, perhaps by the canonized saints, who certainly have not always been remarkable for truthfulness.

The New Testament, therefore, bases the duty of truth-speaking on the foundation of the new birth, a birth by which we are translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear son, and it says, "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings and have put on the new man which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him."

I believe that the demoralization into which the Jesuits have led themselves and their fellowmen and even whole communities, is largely due to this, that they do not seem to know anything about the new birth. They confuse it with the sacrament of baptism, and consequently after all their ethical teaching and their elaborate casuistry are devised for men and women who are not born again, and do not know that it is possible to be born again. The New Testament, on the other hand, treats the new birth as a fact of supernatural grace, but also as an actual and verifiable experience, and upon that basis it lays down the rule of absolute and unswerving truthfulness. No subterfuge, no equivocation, no dissembling, is for one moment allowed. All liars, black and white, have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

But there are occasions in life, occasions which can be easily pictured by an ingenious imagination, occasions which are not so common in actual experience, but yet may and do occur, when it seems almost necessary to depart from the truth. That is what moralists call the lie of exigency. For example, we may possess a secret

which we must not reveal; we are closely questioned upon it, and to remain silent may seem to reveal the secret. There may be truths which we are afraid to utter because they might be injurious to others. No sensible person would forget that life does present such problems, and the question is, what does the morality of the New Testament teach us in such cases? I will quote to you the verdict of a typical Protestant moralist—Martensen. He says: "In such cases we have to follow after the spirit of power that gives us faith and courage, that works in us the energy of truth and love in our conduct towards others, and we are to seek after the spirit of wisdom that teaches us to act with full consideration, so that we keep all relations in their totality ever before our eyes. . . . A lie of exigency cannot occur with a personality that is found in possession of full courage of perfect love and holiness, as of the enlightened, all-penetrating glance." That is to say, the Protestant moralist, when he is confronted with these apparent necessities to tell a lie, immediately falls back upon the fact of the Christian being born again of the Spirit, and bids the Christian seek the power that comes from God alone.

And though Martensen is a Dane he finds a most beautiful illustration from our English literature. He quotes that story—a true story—which Sir Walter Scott has treated in "The Heart of Midlothian," where Jeanie Deans could save her sister from a shameful execution according to the law of the time if she would take an oath that her sister had communicated her secret to her. But it never occurred to the girl brought up in the austere faith of a Biblical Protestantism, that it was even possible to tell such a lie. And she therefore committed herself to a task of extraordinary difficulty and through toil and peril, the girl made the journey to London, and obtained at the last moment the deliverance for her sister. The way of the lie was so easy and venial. Wherever was their such a venial lie if not in the case of Jeanie Deans? Who would have condemned her? But the way she took was the only way in the eyes of God. The weak human heart, confronted by the difficulties of life, cries out "I cannot keep the truth." Faith laughs at impossibilities and cries, "It can be done." Are you a Christian? Are you born again? Then when these difficulties come, as they may, to any one of us, you appeal fearlessly to your Father in heaven, who is the Father of Lights, and your will turn instinctively to Jesus Christ who is himself the truth, and your whole spirit will say to him, "It is thou, Oh Lord, who hast told me not to lie and I dare not lie; whatever consequences come, keep my lips true." And the Spirit will tell you what you are to say in that time of your fierce trial, and no lie shall stain the lips which are consecrated to God, and being holy, offer up to him, the daily sacrifice of praise and love. He told us not to lie; he will teach us how to avoid even the lie of exigency.

But now, in sharp contrast with this teaching of the New Testament, that bases itself upon the idea and fact of a regenerate soul, and therefore advocates a fearless truthfulness I have—though it cuts me to the quick to have to do it—to bring home to your consciences that the Roman Catholic Church, basing itself upon a system of external sacraments makes it a part of its teaching to justify the departure from the absolute truth. No treatise of moral philosophy written by Catholics that I have been able to come across is without the careful provision for what they call "reservation," with-holding the truth under certain circumstances by ambiguities and equivocations. They all of them draw a distinction between a purely mental and a broad mental reservation. The one is not permissible, but the other is permissible without sin. Thus a Roman Catholic moralist, Pruner, quite a modern writer, whose book was published only ten years ago, and who is an authority in Germany upon Catholic morals, says, "It is not a lie to tell a falsehood if anyone asks about anything about which he is not allowed to ask, for instance, if a husband asks his wife whether she has committed adultery." Horrible as it may seem, this Catholic writer finds the justification of such falsehoods in the example of Jesus Christ, and quotes five passages from the New Testament in support of his views—to me the most appalling proof of the ignorance of even learned Catholics of the meaning and the spirit of the very writings which are the charter of our faith. And so an English Jesuit whose book is far more recent, Father Rickaby, justifies what he calls "broad mental reservation for the preservation of some secret which one has a duty to others or grave reasons of one's own, to keep. In this case" he says, "you do not speak against your mind—because your mind inserts 'secrets apart,' and therefore it is no lie. 'Secrets apart is the handwriting on the wall.'" I suppose this morality of dissimulation is demanded by the necessities of the confessional. No doubt if it is right for a priest to extract the deep secrets of his brother's heart, it may be necessary for him to preserve the secrets even by dissimulation, but it is the horror, by no means the worst horror, of the confessional that it requires the priest who ought to be the minister of God, to practice and to justify dissimulation.

But what does this principle lead us—a principle which is held by Liguori, and accepted, as the ethics of

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