

Morning Star and Catholic Messenger.

NEW ORLEANS, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1870.

Lecture of Archbishop Purcell on the Ecumenical Council.

The Most Rev. Archbishop Purcell delivered a lecture on the 21st ult., in Cincinnati, for the benefit of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, on the Council of the Vatican. The peculiar relations of his Grace to that Council, and the freedom with which his name has been used in its regard, render his views after the event of no small moment to many. We must say, that the report of the lecture seems to be very inaccurate—for in no other way can we reconcile statements bordering on blunders, and an incoherency of style not at all characteristic of the Most Rev. Prelate. But even with these allowances, the reader will find something to startle and surprise.

After some preliminary remarks, he said:

You know there never was before a single bishop from America in any such Council. There was full and fair representation of all Christendom. In the first schema we were called upon to discuss the origin of governments, and also of the propagation of religious and scientific truth. I am happy to say that never have the rights of science been better vindicated than they were by the bishops of that assembly. When an American bishop—who was my own fellow-countryman, Florida, who is a sound theologian, a profound philosopher, and a chemist withal, who has taught philosophy and chemistry in Baltimore—arose to speak, he addressed the Cardinals, reproaching the Roman Inquisition which had done injustice to Galileo, and said: "Your Roman congregation esteemed him as teaching doctrine contrary to Scripture when he taught the doctrine of the revolution of the earth." I mention this fact to show that the bishops were free, that the Cardinals took this reprimand from the hand of the bishop. He also assured Spanish bishops there and showed them what injury their predecessors in their various sees would have done to religion as well as to humanity and to science, if they had pressed too far their unwise arguments against the possibility of existence of an American part of the globe, on their theory that there could not be any antipodes. From that absurd reasoning they concluded that it was a wild, chimerical project which Christopher Columbus proposed, and for which he had solicited the aid of Ferdinand and Isabella. "Now I do not mention this fact," he said, "as any reproach to existing Cardinals of the Catholic Church, but simply to warn you that science has its rights, which should never be interfered with, and that scientific men should pursue their investigations with the largest liberty. If they are disposed to reject Christianity, it should be said to them: 'Gentlemen, the Bible is true. You must not pretend to find in science anything antagonistic to what is contained in the revelation of the Bible. When you think you have done so, it is your duty to submit it to the decision of learned, wise men, to the Church, and the Church will never find fault with you. Even if Cardinals condemn Galileo, the Pope never signed that condemnation, and now that great, good man's memory is everywhere rehabilitated. The Inquisition Cardinals themselves acknowledged that injustice was done to that eminent scientific man, and this will never be attempted again.' Another of your bishops wished science to enjoy the same ample liberty as the Bishop of Pittsburgh. He refused the representation that our Catholics of America do not properly instruct you on the reason that if they were they would not deny Papal Infallibility. The bishop was opposed to the principle and definition of Infallibility; he strenuously and conscientiously opposed it, he indignantly replied to the statement I have referred to by saying our American Catholics are better instructed than Italians; he was told to be cautious, but I think he uttered great truths. He did not want to disparage Italians, but at the same time he would not consent to allow such a thing to be said of American Catholics, and I can say with truth, are the best instructed portion of the Catholic world. When it came my turn to speak, I asked for leave and it was granted. I intended to speak on a subject that was then dominant and uppermost in the Council—the civil constitution of government. In the course of a day or two, however, the entire order of proceedings was changed. I was left out in the cold, as were other bishops. A new series of topics were also presented to us. But I wrote out my discourse on Civil Government. I sent a copy of it to the archives of the Council. In that discourse I took occasion to say in form of human government; that the source of power is placed by God in the people; that kings rule for their benefit, and that the people were not created for the benefit of kings. The Church of God had no need of kingly patronage or protection. For the first 300 years of her history she managed to prosper and arrive at spiritual supremacy without the aid of kings and despite of them; while she was persecuted she so prospered that the blood of martyrs has everywhere been the seed of the Church. I believe it would have been a happy thing for the Church if kings had never pretended to be her protectors. I spoke then of America, I said that our civil constitution gave perfect liberty to every denomination of Christians; that it looked with equal favor on them all, and that I verily believed this was better for the Catholic religion than if she was the object of the special patronage and protection of the State. All we want is a free field and no favor. Truth is mighty and will prevail. We are on the side with every sect and people to judge Christians. It is for which of us teaches which of us is right, which of us is most conformable to the Holy Scriptures. Then if they approve our religion, let them embrace it; if not, reject. I believe this to be the best theory. I illustrated what I said by contrasting the condition of Catholics in all nations of Europe with American Catholics. I showed that in Spain the Catholic religion is persecuted; that in Portugal the Catholic religion is persecuted, even Sisters of Charity being driven out of the country; that in Italy monks, pastors, religious people were pitilessly driven away from their homes; that the monastery of Monte Casino, the home of science, for which a voice was raised in the British Parliament, had been destroyed by a nominally Catholic government. When I came down from the Ambo, Archbishop Manning, himself a strong Infallibilist, was the first to rush forward, take me by the hand, and say, "You are a true Republican."

There were 530 bishops who thought with the Pope that he was infallible. We were certain at once, from the beginning, that there was a decided majority against us; yet we thought that we had discovered

inconveniences in the definition of the dogma which it was important we should make known to the Holy Father the Pope. There were twenty bishops dwelling together in our American College at Rome. We met to know what course we should pursue with regard to this matter. The Archbishop of Baltimore urged us to do what we proposed, viz., to write to the Pope a most respectful letter, and implore him not to have this subject brought before the Council. I drew up the address to the Pope in Latin, and was the first to sign it. Twenty-seven Archbishops and Bishops signed also. Almost all of them were American, except the Archbishop of Halifax and two others. The Archbishop of Baltimore, as I said, urged us to this course, but he declined to sign the petition because he was a member of one of the Committees on Faith. Some other bishops made up their minds to sign no paper on this question, either for or against. Besides this there were 140 German and Hungarian and even Italian and French bishops who had addressed similar petitions to the Holy Father. There are others, also, who declined, because they said it would show a want of unanimity and union among bishops. The Holy Father did not think proper to adopt our suggestions.

When my turn came to speak on the subject of Infallibility, I spoke after the venerable patriarch of Jerusalem, whom I had known for many years. He stated in his discourse several things which I took notice of, and to which I was bound to answer; he was a strong speaker. In the first place he made a striking analogy between Monotheism and Gallicanism; he showed that these passed through the same phase, that they went side by side. This discourse was very ingenious and very deep, very historical and gave great offence to the French Bishops. When I entered the pulpit I addressed myself to the Council, and then, before I delivered the discourse which I had proposed for this solemn occasion, asked if I could make some remarks on the oration which had just then been delivered by the Holy Patriarch of Jerusalem. In the course of his remarks he said we were discussing a question that had long since been decided, that certain Council of Lyons and a Council of Florence had declared the Pope to be the dogma, that the Pope had full power to declare infallibly. Why, then, do we waste our time in discussing it at the present time? said I to the Cardinals' Council. "I am exceedingly obliged to the venerable Patriarch of Jerusalem for placing us in such good company. Every one knows that this Council at Lyons, after the Council at Florence, examined the question of the Pope's Infallibility, but they did not see their way through, they could not find sufficient evidence in Scripture or tradition to define the personal, independent, separate, absolute infallibility of the Pope; therefore they laid the question aside." Then I proceeded to say what I had proposed to say to the Cardinals: "You must allow me frankness to say that the greatest error, if not fault, has been committed by you or by those who had direction of this Council; that error is this: You did not from the beginning state what you want by your dogma. You say the Pope has infallibility, but it has never been decided at what time, or how, or in what manner. I want to know when I am to obey the Pope as an infallible interpreter of the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and of the teachings of tradition, you have never informed us." My beloved friends, I think this sufficient vindication for me to appear in the East which I will not name, which has greatly abused me. That paper said I was obstinately, irreverently opposed to anything that emanated from Rome, and especially on the subject of infallibility. I will turn to the whole tenor of my life in this city. I then said: "Your definition of Infallibility has caused a great deal of trouble. It created schisms and differences of opinion in the Church. One Pope, I imagine it was Nicholas I., taught that baptism in the name of Jesus was all sufficient, without the name of the Father and the Holy Ghost. If he were infallible, he never would have taught that. Here is John XXII., who teaches from the pulpit that those who die with the peace of God on their lips will be in a beatific condition until the day of Judgment. Are we to consider those teachings ex-cathedra?"

Well, when I got to that part of my discourse I told the Cardinals in Council that there was another weightier objection which I wished to have removed before I gave my assent to that dogma, and that was, how we are to understand the claims of Boniface VIII., who said, "Two swords are given me by God, a spiritual and a temporal one." I sought in the Dominican library of Minerva in Rome, to refresh my memory, and to see on what grounds they claimed the right of controlling temporary affairs, of deposing Henry VIII., or Elizabeth, or any other temporal Prince, or absolving their vassals from their oath of allegiance, if their sovereigns did not respect the act of excommunication by the Church. I could not find any text of authority for that in the Bible; hence, I wanted the Council to say whether they asserted a right of that kind, or assumed it as a right. The entire Council with one voice cried out: "Those Popes had no authority, no commission from God, to pretend to any such power."

Well, I told them that I thanked God I had spoken, and had it decided by this Council that instead of assuming the responsibility of those by-gone times, the day had gone by when such things were possible. We have done a great deal by having these two important matters settled. The question was also raised by a Cardinal: "What is to be done with the Pope if he becomes a heretic?" It was answered that there had never been such an example; but in such a case a Council of Bishops could depose him for heresy; for from the moment he becomes a heretic he is not the head of the Church, but for a moment obliged to listen to him when he begins to teach a doctrine which the Church knows to be false, and he would cease to be a Pope, being deposed by God himself. If a Pope, for instance, were to say that a belief in God is false, you would not be obliged to believe him; nor if he were to deny the rest of the Creed, "I believe in Christ," etc. The supposition is injurious to the Holy Father in the very thing which serves to show you his fullness, with which the subject was considered. Ample thought was given to every possibility. If he denies any dogma of the Church held by every true believer, he is no more Pope than either you or I; so in this respect this dogma of Infallibility amounts to nothing as an article of temporal government or as a cover for heresy. I had a great deal more to say, but I feel that perhaps I may have been already too long; but I cannot refrain from making some observations in regard to the manner in which I have been treated by certain papers. Before a full report of my first speech in the Council in Latin, and in which I have ample quotations and arguments to show that the people are the sovereigns of power.

I propose now to speak of a class of men

who, oppressed with a sense of their own honor and dignity, outrage the feelings of dignity and propriety in speaking of those by whom they have been received as gentlemen, and whom they wish to present before the public. I do not know of a more impudent and insolent class of society than these "interviewers." They come with premeditation and malice, some of them with a Pharisaic pride take thought, and with a pharisaic pride take thought, they put him in the pillory in the newspapers the next morning. [Here he denounced an "interviewer" of Cincinnati, who recently published an interview with him.]

I also say that the publication of the doctrine of Infallibility need not wait for the official signing of the acts of the Council before proclaiming the dogma, after it has been pronounced on by nine hundred and seventy-five Cardinals, Bishops, Abbots and Patriarchs.

He said that he came here to proclaim the personal infallibility of the Pope in his own words. He was a true Roman Catholic, as he had said here, as he had written in his letters to the Pope, as he had proclaimed in the Council, and as he had affirmed in Cincinnati and elsewhere in this country. In his discussion with Mr. Campbell he had indicated the infallibility of the Church in the strongest language and with the strongest arguments of which he was capable, and he was not now going back of all that he had hitherto said upon the subject. Mr. Corry in his remarks had been very unjust to him. The purport of Mr. Corry's remarks was that whereas Archbishop Purcell had denied in his debate with Alexander Campbell, many years ago, that Papal Infallibility was a dogma of the Church, the lie was now given to his assertion; that Alexander Campbell is now sustained, and the doctrine decided to have always been a dogma of the Church. The doctrine of Papal Infallibility never was believed to be a doctrine of the Catholic Church until the other day; therefore Archbishop was right and Alexander Campbell wrong in saying so. How an Archbishop must feel when he finds a sense of being a heretic, however faint that sense may be.

He then proceeded to read the text of the dogma of Infallibility. He said that it was well that he should proclaim the last words of the Pope in defining the doctrine of Infallibility. He prefaced the reading with these words: "I want editors of newspapers, reporters who are here present, to send it on the wings of the press, north, south, east and west, that I, John B. Purcell, Archbishop of Cincinnati, an one of the most faithful Catholics who ever swore allegiance to Rome."

Letter of Mgr. Dupanloup, Bishop of Orleans.

The following is a portion of an admirable letter, asking for prayers for the army and assistance for the wounded, which has been issued by the illustrious Bishop of Orleans, and will be read with deep interest by all:

Dear Beloved Brethren—I had scarcely arrived among you when I was deeply affected by thoughts that now fill the minds of all Frenchmen and agitate their hearts. When, after passing through Italy and France, to be as soon as possible among you, I heard the rumors of war, I considered it my duty, in taking leave of my pupils, and in distributing to them their prizes, to say something of military and Christian honor. I thought it my duty to unite them in prayer in favor of what makes the heart of a great people thrill with emotion, when I received the following letter:

"My Lord—I request your Lordship, in the name of His Majesty the Emperor, to ask for public prayers in your diocese. Place France, her ruler, and the noble child, who is going before he has attained the proper age to combat, under the protection of God, who holds in his hands the fate of battles and the destiny of nations. When our heroic army marches forth, ask Him to bless our arms, and to permit a glorious and durable peace to follow the horrors of war. Receive, etc., EMILE OLLIVIER, Minister of State."

I hail with joy those noble and religious words, and I applaud above all the last wish expressed in them. Yes, "may a glorious and durable peace soon follow the pangs and horrors of war." Such are the real sentiments that every French and Christian heart should feel. They are the sentiments that the faithful "to pray for the rulers of nations and for all those who hold authority, that we may all here below lead a quiet and tranquil life in the peace of piety and of virtue." With an ardor which age and fatigues have not been able to lessen, I followed the country in its efforts to obtain that just liberty of which she is worthy, to resist against disorder in her preoccupation about the harvest, and in her resolution when war came on against my foot on touching my native soil found it thrill me with emotion, and then my soul became moved by all the sentiments that beguile the souls of Frenchmen, and I felt in this sad and solemn hour a deep love for my country, and was ready to give every thing for her, my best wishes, my prayers, and my humble offerings. But, do not, however, my brethren, expect a Christian to admire war. No. In presence of God, who shed His blood to reconcile men to each other, I deplore this painful mystery of war, and all of us, priests and bishops, we pray that it may be avoided, and that for ever it be impossible. And without surprise I learn that the Sovereign Pontiff, our common Father, touched with pity and forgetting his own perils, wrote to the two sovereigns who are beginning a terrible war, to beseech of them to spare their people such a frightful misfortune. Who does not feel sad at the thought that men so proud of their civilization have not yet been able to efface war from the annals of their history? Who does not feel saddened for Christians whose hearts have not brought their Gospel to such an end, to call that Gospel, however, of peace? Who does not feel sad at the thought that the nations will replace the triumphs of force and of war by the peaceful force of right, and at least in Christian nations, by the inviolable respect of justice? Alas! alas! When shall men cease to exterminate each other, and even in peace to destroy each other's strength in sterile hatred and in great and extensive preparations for war? They are afflicted by their mortality, and yet at times they hasten to destroy each other. As if they did not find themselves mortal enough, they invent deaths; they already find a painful enough of the great efforts of their genius, one of the most vaunted progress of human industry, is to create murdering engines such as were never imagined before; it is to unite in one of them a multiplicity of shots carrying death with them in such rapidity that our first battle with the *inconnu* and defies all foresight. Alas! for my part, I cannot say how much even the glorious death of so many fine and brave young men weighs

upon my soul, as I follow them in spirit with my inexpressible admiration. It seems to me as if the Rhine itself flowed with blood! No—let me not ask me to admire war! And yet who, in deploring war, will not admire the virtue? Valor, military sacrifice, the virtue of the soldier, the genius of their chiefs, heroism in the combat, and self-sacrifice after. Do not speak to me of the sublime horror of the cannonade, and of all the prodigious effects of blind force; do not hope to see me applaud carnage; but tell me that this poor French peasant gave, without a murmur, his son to the army; that the youth left his native village to cross over unknown lands; that he marched day and night, obedient, silent and cheerful, to attack some nameless fort; and that there, under fire, to save a shred of linen with the national colors on it, and which is called the flag of France, he was killed in pieces in a ditch, or that, having escaped death, he came back without a reward, to take on his father's farm the plow or spade—ah, that is what I admire, that, indeed, is heroism! Tell me that in the hottest fire the General remains calm, led his men to the breach with that steady and sure *coup d'oeil* which assures victory in battle, and that his mind is perfectly unmoved in presence of death! Tell me that these noble descendants of great French families enlist as volunteers, giving up everything dear to them, their wealth, their splendid residences, their wives and children, to go to the Rhine, and show themselves worthy of their name, and to transmit to their sons, with the souvenir of their ancestors, their ancient valor. Tell me, above all, that the armies no longer plunder, no longer leave hatred and vengeance behind them, that they respect the enemy, the wounded and the foreign country! Oh, then my patriotism bows down to the obscure peasant, to those young heroes, to those skillful Generals, to that just war, to that modern army—because I love sacred fire, genius, progress and order. And I pray God with ardor for the triumph of justice, and for the glorious army going to combat and to suffer to obtain it. It is God truly, my brethren, who inspires courage and makes a people valiant. It is He who gives France those warlike virtues so worthy of admiration, that fearless intrepidity, that invincible vigor, and when it is requisite, that patience which in the end triumphs over every obstacle. Our country is, above all others, proud of possessing those glorious favors of the God of armies. Yes, in the homage rendered to us by our allies, even by our enemies, we can say that, among all nations, France can sing the words of gratitude of the inspired soldier: "Blessed be the Lord who has given strength to my arms for war, and formed my hands for the combat."

FELIX, Bishop of Orleans.

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