

"frankly pagan," and the Bible-in-schools party's only suggestion, as of old, is, not that the party shall do anything, but that the State shall do what the party are too tired to do—which has been the fault of the party all the time. They see what they think is an enemy. They are too tired or too frightened to tackle him. Let the other fellow tackle him. We will stand by and "sool" him on."

THE CHURCH AND MODERN IDEAS

(By His Grace the Archbishop of Wellington.)

Most of what goes by the name of 'Modern Ideas' may be condensed into the well-known formula, dating from the French Revolution, and to-day inscribed with bitter irony, alas! on most public buildings in France: Liberty, equality, and fraternity. Now it can be irrefragably proved (1) that the ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity are by no means irreconcilable with Christian dogmas, nay, that they were brought into the world by the Church; (2) that they cannot subsist without the Church.

I.

(1) Liberty is a magic word. It stirs the soul to its deepest depths! All men thrill at its name, all men respond to its appeal. So proud is man of his liberty that he prizes no good, unless he has liberty prior to it. So zealous is he of it that he will not lose a particle of it, and he regards any attempt against his liberty as an attempt against himself. And he is right; for it is liberty that enables him to put forth all his energies, and imparts to him his strength, greatness, and moral value.

Now, on the first appearance of the Church in the world these sentiments of liberty so human, so deeply rooted in our inmost nature, were unknown. First, there was in regard to the bulk of mankind, no individual liberty, the most elementary and indispensable of all; which consists in man having the enjoyment of his body, person, and life; in his having the right to possess the fruits of his labor, to found a family, to make a home. In the heathen world, despite its great advance in civilisation, mankind were divided into two classes: on the one side a few millions of freemen, on the other hundreds of millions of slaves. And this division was held to be a law of nature. 'It was nature,' said Aristotle, 'that, with a view of preservation, made certain beings to command, and others to obey. It willed that the being endowed with foresight should command as a master, and that the being, capable, by its bodily faculties, to execute orders, should obey as a slave.' But Jesus Christ came upon earth and said: 'The truth shall make you free.' (John viii., 32); and, on the strength of these words, the Church broke off the fetters of slaves and restored to them their human liberty.

Next, there was no political liberty, because it supposes equality, and equality was as much unknown as liberty; as we shall shortly see. Again, there was no religious liberty. The State, whether in the form of a republic or an empire, was the arbiter of the conscience and the destinies of mankind, the absolute master of bodies and souls. But one day Jesus uttered these pregnant words: 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.' (Luke xx., 25). The Church took up these words and caused them to penetrate and leaven society, at the cost of the death of myriads of her children; for, after all, it was to establish religious liberty, the liberty to believe and worship according to conscience, and not according to Caesar's behests, that myriads of martyrs shed their blood. Henceforth the Church and the State were distinct; obeying Caesar, was not identic with obeying God. Thanks to Christ, thanks to His Church, human conscience was freed from

The Yoke of Governments.

But if the Church liberated human conscience from the yoke of Governments, was it in order to bend it under another yoke, to hold it captive under its own domination? No. Here we touch the grave and irritating question of liberty of conscience—the liberty to think, the liberty to act. No question in our day has raised such clamor and hatred against the Church as this. Let us attempt its solution, in the light of reason and history, as briefly as possible, but also as completely as possible, on account of its importance.

This solution, it seems, will not be hard to find if we make a necessary distinction between liberty and right. God in creating man gave to him the sublime and kingly privilege of liberty. Man is free; that is a fact. He can choose between truth and falsehood, good and evil. But does it follow that he can determine himself indifferently, according to the whim of the moment, either to truth or falsehood, good or evil? By no means; if he has the liberty to do so, he has not the right. He CAN physically, but morally he MUST not. Our reason, indeed, informs us that our liberty of action has necessary limitations, which are honesty, morality, the liberty of others, which we have no right to infringe; which, are, in a word, the limits of the rights of God and the rights of man. But as our reason is fallible, and our will weak, society comes to our help and takes its precautions against them by putting necessary barriers to our liberty, which prevent its abuse and keep it within the bounds of right. Thus civil society by its code of laws puts salutary and indispensable restrictions to our liberty, as, for instance, when it forbids us to excite others to debauchery, or rebellion, to desertion, or provocation to desertion, etc. Nor does the religious society, called the Church, proceed otherwise when she says to us: You ought to do that because it is good, you ought to avoid this because it is bad. By enacting these principles of morality she is only conforming to the essential laws of reason; she points out where good is; she regulates and directs; she does not destroy our liberty of action.

It is just the same with the liberty of thought. We have radically the liberty of remaining undecided and wavering between error and truth; nay, more, we have the liberty to prefer error to truth. But we have not the right to do so, and here, too, our reason protests and cries out that our liberty dishonors itself when it does not choose what it knows to be true, and that no interest, however sacred and lawful, can allow man to sacrifice truth to error.

There is such an adaptation of our intellect to the truth, such an equation between reason and truth, that we are shocked when we perceive a disjunction between these two terms. Hence it happens that in ordinary life we maintain even trivial things which we think true, with an obstinacy and an intolerance which will not give way; so true it is that we feel that truth has imprescriptible rights and is unyielding. Hence it has been aptly said: 'Error has no claims to liberty.'

But who can flatter himself that he has the truth? Only the Church. She does not teach the opinions more or less sure, more or less disputed, changing and reformable, of human sciences; she teaches the doctrine of Christ. Who said: 'I am the truth.' Jesus Christ has committed to her the guardianship of this truth, and she has never failed in her mission. This sacred deposit she keeps most precious, never allowing a syllable to be added to or taken from it. For its perfect preservation she has never ceased, in the course of ages, to point out error and deter from it the souls entrusted to her charge, with superhuman energy, like a mother defending her offspring. In matters of doctrine the Church is superbly intolerant—and she glories in it—because she is the truth, as the sun is intolerant of darkness because it is the sun. But, in practice, in her relations with souls what tolerance she exhibits! And of whom has she learnt it? Of her Founder, Jesus Christ. Christ did not employ force, but persuasion. Remember His words: 'If any man will come after me.' It is an invitation, not a restraint. Remember that beautiful scene in the Gospel: Christ had sent His apostles to announce the good tidings to the Samaritans, who refused to hear them, and sent the apostles away. Angered by this check and this resistance to grace, James and John came to our Saviour and said: 'Wilt thou that we bid fire from heaven to fall upon these men and consume them?' How did Christ answer this appeal to force? Listen to His words and retain them for ever. In a tone of severe reproach He said: 'You know not to what spirit you belong. The Son of Man came not to slay men but to save them.' It was also persuasion and not might that He put into the hands of His apostles when, about to leave the earth, He sent them to conquer the world. 'Go, and teach all nations. . . . When you go into a house salute it saying: peace be to this house. And if they do not receive you nor hearken to your words, go out of that house—and shake off the dust from your shoes.' No violence, you see; liberty is respected.

That is All the Gospel.

But has the Church continued the Gospel? Yes; that is certain. Observe that we are not speaking of Christian kings and princes, nor of people belonging to the Church; they are not the Church, and the

"A SORROWFUL heart is drouthy; but a cup o' genuine 'Cook o' the North' will quench ony."

"A toom haun is nae lure for a hawk," but a cup o' Hondal-Lanka's a temptation for anybody!