

WHO DIE WITHOUT BAPTISM?

There is no dogmatic definition of the Church in which an answer to this question is contained. But all Catholic theologians are agreed—(1) that infants who die without baptism are excluded from the kingdom of heaven; (2) that they will not enjoy the beatific vision outside heaven; (3) that in common with adults they will arise and be assembled for judgment on the last day; and (4) that after the last day there will be but two states—namely, a state of supernatural and supreme felicity and a state of what may be called in a wide sense, a state of damnation.

The whole question, therefore, resolves itself into this—In what does that latter state consist in case of unbaptised infants?

Damnation is a state of existence admitting of many degrees differing widely from one another. (1) Its most deplorable form is found in the condition of the reprobate, who in the prison of hell, together with the positive pain of loss, will suffer also positive pains of mind and body—the worm that never dies, and the fire that is never extinguished. (2) It may consist in the positive pain of loss alone, that is in the consciousness of having lost God the supreme good, but without any pain of sense. (3) It may be limited to a negative pain of loss, i.e., a deprivation of the beatific vision without any consciousness of the loss sustained. (4) Finally it might, with this negative pain of loss, include a large measure of natural happiness, including a natural knowledge and love of God.

No one has ever maintained that unbaptised infants suffer the same punishment as the reprobate. It is morally certain that they suffer no pain of sense. 'This opinion,' says Dr. Murray, in his treatise on the Church, 'appears to us, not only on account of the authority of theologians, but also, and indeed much more, on account of the solid reasons they advance in its favor, most probable, nay, morally certain.'

We believe, therefore, with all confidence that these children suffer no pain of sense. But are they also exempt from the pain of loss? Do they know and grieve for the infinite happiness they have lost in being excluded from the sight of God and the kingdom of His glory? Are they like the children of a dethroned king, wandering in a foreign land, and ever looking with longing eyes and aching hearts, towards the lofty towers of their father's kingdom? Or, on the other hand, is the pain of loss with them only negative, either because they are unconscious of the loss they have sustained, or, though knowing it, they are able to conform their minds perfectly to the will of God, and therefore to enjoy all the natural happiness with which God fills them?

Some have held that as these infants

WILL BE PRESENT AT THE GENERAL JUDGMENT,

they must know, and knowing, must grieve for the glorious inheritance they have lost. But the weight of authority is certainly on the other side. It is much more commonly held that even if they know that others are happier than themselves, they are perfectly resigned to God's will, and suffer no pain of loss in regard to happiness which is not suited to their condition.

But Catholic theologians go further, and maintain on solid grounds that these unbaptised infants, besides being exempt from all pain of sense and of loss, enjoy all the natural happiness, including a natural knowledge and love of God, which is suitable to their state.

Some imagine that this natural happiness will be enjoyed on this earth after it has been purified by fire and prepared for the habitation of these unbaptised infants. In several parts of the New Testament, as in the Epistles of St. Paul to the Romans, it appears to be clearly signified—(1) that the present condition of the world was not that originally intended by the Almighty. (2) That the world itself was not the cause or occasion of the unfavorable change to which it was subjected. (3) That the visible creation expects, as it were, a glorious change and 'groaneth and travaileth in pain' till it be accomplished, and (4) that as the fall of man subjected the visible creation to corruption, so the final glory of the blessed will be reflected in the world which was created for man's use and enjoyment.

Supposing then that this world will undergo such a glorious renovation, it is reasonable to conclude that it will still be used for the use and benefit of such of the children of men as will neither be reigning in glory with God in heaven, nor shut up within the confines of hell.

Lessius gives a graphic description of the part these unbaptised infants will play in the greatest of the world's dramas when the hour cometh, wherein all that are in the graves

SHALL HEAR THE VOICE OF THE SON OF GOD,

and obey the Archangel's trumpet summoning all the children of Adam to the General Judgment.

'They shall be gathered together in one place,' he says, 'but separated from the wicked as having a destiny different from theirs. They shall see the majesty of the Judge and adore Him. They shall see the assembly of the saints and of the wicked, of whose good and bad works they shall have a knowledge. They shall hear the sentence of the Judge pronounced on both, and shall rejoice that they themselves are not amongst the wicked. They shall give thanks to God for having snatched them away before coming to the use of reason, inasmuch as the great majority of them, especially the children of unbelievers, would otherwise have incurred the same damnation. They will not, therefore, murmur against God, but will feel themselves exceedingly indebted to Him for having delivered them from the peril of such great woes. They shall themselves receive a sentence from the Judge, but a gracious one; which, though it excludes them from the beatific vision and the kingdom of heaven, secures them in a state suited to the dignity of their nature, wherein, satisfied and rejoicing, they shall dwell in the praises of God for all eternity.'

'All this,' he continues, 'is confirmed by the scholastic writers.' St. Thomas says: 'that they shall largely share in the divine goodness, and in natural perfections, and shall be united to God in the communion of natural goods, and so shall rejoice in Him from their natural knowledge and love of Him.' . . . Wherefore, although they are called *damned*, inasmuch as they are for ever deprived of the glory of heaven for which they were created, we may reasonably believe that their lot is happier and more joyful than that of any human being on earth.'—(De Perf. Moribusque Div. 13 n.n. 143-4).

Diocesan News.

ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON.

(From our own correspondent.)

November 17.

St. Joseph's Orphanage benefits to the extent of £15 from the social held last month.

His Grace the Archbishop has rejoined Father Ainsworth in the mission work. They are at present at the Hutt.

The Very Rev. Father Lewis and Rev. Father O'Shea are spending a short holiday in Palmerston North. The Catholic bazaar is in full swing there and good results are anticipated.

The net proceeds of the performance of 'Arrah-na-Pogue,' given by the Fabian Dramatic Club in aid of the Newtown Convent, are estimated at £50.

Mr. T. Dwan, senr., has just returned from a trip round the world. He looks the picture of health and has much benefited from his holiday.

The Sacred Heart Church at Thorndon is now approaching completion. It was announced last Sunday that the solemn opening will take place on the first Sunday in February, when his Eminence Cardinal Moran will be present at the ceremony. Other Australian prelates are also expected.

Latest advices from the examiner on behalf of the Royal Academy of Music show that Miss Gwendoline Flanagan, a pupil of St. Mary's Convent, is leading for the gold medal given annually by the Associated Board to the most proficient candidate in singing in the Australasian colonies. On two previous occasions a pupil of the convent won the much coveted prize.

The pupils of St. Mary's Convent gave another of their finished concerts in the convent on Thursday before a large and appreciative audience. Each of the performers did so well that it would be invidious to individualise. The programme consisted of piano solos by Misses B. Flynn and Falconer, a piano duet by Misses W. Connell and White, songs by Misses Bailin, Macloskey, Connell, and G. Flanagan, vocal duets by Misses Connell and White, Rowe and Flynn, and four chorus items.

The members of the Marist Brothers' Old Boys' Association intend shortly to give a variety entertainment. They are working assiduously and the affair promises to be a success. The Literary and Debating Society held its weekly meeting last Thursday evening. Several impromptu speeches on various questions were given by the members. It is intended to close the season by producing Dickens' 'Trial by Jury.' The piece will be well staged and a first-class entertainment should result.

St. Mary of the Angels Church was packed to the doors on the occasion of the choir's ninth sacred concert last Sunday evening. Madame Evelyn Carlton assisted the choir and gave in admirable style Mendelssohn's 'I will sing of Thy great mercy' and 'Jerusalem,' both from the great composer's 'St. Paul.' Mr. A. S. Ballance gave a very tasteful rendering of the solo in Anlauphi's 'Domine ad adjurandum,' set for male voices. The 'Gloria' from Gounod's 'Messe Solennelle' was undoubtedly the finest piece of work done by the choir for a considerable time; in attack and general attention to expression marks the choir and orchestra fairly excelled themselves. The solos were also especially well sung by Mrs. Oakes (soprano), Mr. Carr (tenor), and Mr. Ballance (bass). Mr. Ballance also sang the solo in Clifton's 'Ecce Deus.' An unaccompanied quartet, 'God is a Spirit,' from Sterndale Bennett's 'Woman of Samaria,' was given in a finished manner by Mrs. Oakes, Miss A. Ross, Messrs. Carr and Ballance. The concert part concluded with the 'Hallelujah Chorus.' As an offertory piece the orchestra, led by Mr. H. A. Forest, played a 'Berceuse' by Anton Mistouski. During the Benediction Mrs. Oakes and Mr. Carr sang Murphy's 'O Salutaris' and the choir again showed to advantage in Lambillotte's 'Magnificat' and 'Tantum Ergo.' As a finale the orchestra played the march from 'Athalie.' The conductor, Mr. F. J. Oakes, is to be congratulated on the standard of efficiency maintained by his choir. Mr. D. Kenny presided at the organ.

DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND.

(From our own correspondent.)

November 15.

The laity of the Sacred Heart parish intend to welcome home Dr. Egan with a grand concert, the proceeds of which are to be devoted to the renovation of the presbytery.

Rev. Father O'Carroll and Rev. Father Corcoran, of the Cathedral, officiated, in the absence of the Very Rev. Dr. Egan, O.S.B., at the Sacred Heart Church on last Sunday morning and evening respectively.

The local M.H.R.'s continue to receive at the hands of the local Press, through the editorial and correspondence columns, severe castigation for having taken from the colonial treasure chest that extra £40.