

FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

[A WEEKLY INSTRUCTION FOR YOUNG AND OLD.]

CHAPTER IV.—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD— THE ANGELS—MAN—ORIGINAL SIN.

1. We have now learnt what faith teaches us about God, considered in Himself, whether in His nature or in His personality. It remains for us to discuss the doctrine relating to the works of God.

The works of God admit of two distinctions: the creation of the universe, and the providence by which it is governed. We mean, in speaking here of providence, that economy, action, or succession of actions, by which God leads all creatures to their end, and more especially those which hold the first place in the visible world—namely, man, or the human race.

We will first take for consideration the creation of the world; then the angels; and lastly, man and original sin.

First Article: The Creation of the World.

2. God has created—that is, drawn out of nothing—heaven and earth, with all that they contain, either spiritual or corporal. By this is meant all that exists out of God—namely, the earth which we inhabit, the sun, the moon, and the stars of the firmament, with those millions of globes and suns that occupy the immensity of space; also all living beings, plants, animals, men, and the angels, who are invisible and purely spiritual creatures.

This vast universe has been created by a single word of the Creator, by a simple act of the Divine Will. "He spoke, and all things were made; He commanded, and they were created" (Ps. cxlviii.).

3. In the first page of Genesis the history of the creation is recorded; but in this recital a distinction ought to be observed between those points which are clear and certain, and those which are disputed or obscure.

The clear and certain points are the following:

(1) In the beginning God created heaven and earth.
(2) God made to His own image and likeness the first man, the sole father of the human race.

(3) God established the law of the Sabbath, in order to consecrate the seventh day to the divine worship; and He did so in memory of the creation, which was a type of the weekly period.

(4) God formed the world as it now exists, with its waters, its plants, and its various species of animals; and He accomplished this work in the space of six days.

The points which follow are doubtful, and in no way defined by faith:

(1) What must be understood by the *days* of creation? The Hebrew word *iom*, translated as *day*, may signify a period of 24 hours, or it may be used to denote an indefinite space of time, or a simple distinction of order, without succession of time.

(2) What was the original state of the universe before the days of creation? Were there plants and animals previous to this, which were subsequently engulfed in a tremendous overthrow, thus producing the Mosaic chaos?

(3) Did the different words of the Creator, which constitute the distinct acts of creation, produce their effect immediately or gradually? Had all the plants appeared before the creation of animals? Were there certain species of plants and animals which subsequently perished and have been superseded by other species?

(4) What are we to understand by the work of the fourth day, when the Scriptures tell us God made the sun and the stars to light the earth? Did the sun and the stars commence their existence then, or did they only begin to light up the world, which had now become capable of receiving their constant influence, they having already been in existence?

These and other questions, which are not defined either by the Bible or by the interpretation of the Church, are left for solution to the investigations of science.

4. All that Faith teaches us about the antiquity of the world is, that it did not always exist, but was created in time, or at the beginning of time. The sacred Scriptures do not begin to reckon years from the creation of the world, but from that of man; and they count them

so as to give us only an uncertain chronology, which varies from 4,000 to 5,500 years, or even more, from the time which elapsed between the creation of Adam and the coming of Jesus Christ.

5. The end which God had in view in creating the world was His glory, or the manifestation of His divine attributes, and the true happiness of all reasonable creatures.

MANNIX'S FAREWELL

(By SHANE LESLIE, in the *New Witness*.)

On Wednesday, at the Jermyn Court Hotel, Archbishop Mannix made a farewell speech to the roomful of Irish bishops and prelates, who, since he could not come to them, had crossed the Channel to bring him the good wishes of the people of Ireland before he set back on his journey for Australia. The Irish hierarchy, conservative or progressive, had united to pay him this honor. The Archbishop of Cashel was present with the Bishops of Killaloe and Clonfert. The Bishop of Clonfert sang a touching melody with a rich operatic voice as an introduction and then the Archbishop spoke. His face has sunk considerably in the eight months of his enforced sojourn in England waiting for the opportunity to go to Ireland, which has never come. There were tears in Irish eyes as he bade farewell to men he never expected to see again. His dark eyes still flashed from their cavernous sockets. The grey hair and the purple sash made him as ever picturesque. For half an hour he poured forth molten sentences restating the Irish position strongly no doubt. He disclaimed the idea of a Republic *qua* Republic because only Ireland can self-determine a republic or a kingdom for herself. He asked candidly if the offer of Dominion Home Rule meant what it meant in Australia. He pointed out that no offer had as yet been made worth considering. He insisted that Ireland was behind de Valera, and offered or rather challenged the Government to choose and test any five seats in South Ireland. He poured scorn upon the many whisperers and negotiators with or without goggles. He touched logic and he touched sarcasm. But he was never personal and never bitter. He concealed his own disappointment.

Anxious as he was to see Ireland, he said he preferred not to see her than to sell her, and he would not go to Ireland to do the work of the Government. Thus spoke the old defiant, unrepentant Mannix. But he desired peace, and desired it deeply. He advised the Government to keep to the main road and not try and negotiate in the byroads. He laid great emphasis on the accord that could be reached between the questions of Irish independence and English safety. Whether the settlement took one form or another, it would be possible for Ireland to live at friendship with England, Scotland, and even Wales, he added with a solitary touch of humor.

It was a strong speech, but it was a peace speech. It meant business and conveyed logic. There were no fine words or compliments. He asserted that peace could be had the same day that the Government realised that only British crime and aggression blocked the way. He begged the Government to deal with the only representatives of the Irish people. He left the impression of a peacemaker trying to make smooth a very rock-strewn road for another to use. There was no rancour or self-seeking. He seemed to pin down the rulers of England to the question, "Is it peace?" and to those Englishmen who are faithful to Ireland he seemed wishful to leave the blessing of the Southern Cross.

He is gone now, leaving only Sir John Lavery's fine purple-clad impression of him behind—in some ways the most modern and in others the most mediaeval of prelates. He seems to be straying between two continents, to be lost between two eras. His lonely and consistent voice has certainly been heard in the ends of the earth: Modern times know not what to make of him. In mediaeval times Henry's II's black-and-tan knights would have poleaxed him. A future time will see him right.

"NO RUBBING" Laundry Help maintains its wonderful popularity owing to its marvellous labor-saving and perfect cleansing qualities.

S. Lovell

Central Hairdresser and Tobacconist
Proprietor ... NEW PLYMOUTH

Our Motto: Cleanliness
Civility and Attention