

State, Mammon, and anti-Popery. The modern ideal of freedom is based on the rebellion of man against God: *Diis extinctis successit humanitas*—humanity is set on the altar from which our atheists have removed God. Man is taught to look no longer up to Heaven; he is trained to look down towards earth, or at any rate, no higher than his fellow-men; and his views and aims are therefore gross and earthly.

Retreats for the Laity

For some years past we have had in New Zealand retreats for ladies, conducted at the Sacred Heart Convents and at Teschemakers. This year a retreat for men was offered by the Marist Fathers at St. Bede's College, Christchurch, with success as encouraging as that experienced by the ladies' retreats in the past and present. The fact that a large number of men and women welcome such opportunities is extremely consoling from a Catholic point of view. Retreats conducted under circumstances such as are possible at the places we have named are laden with special graces, and they are held under conditions even more favorable than those attending upon any mission. Not only are there regular sermons and devotions, but these are surrounded by a truly spiritual atmosphere which is not obtainable at ordinary missions in town or country. The retreat is true to its name—a retreat from the world and its cares, from the engrossing business occupations and distractions of every day life, into an enclosed garden in which one walks with God for a few days in perfect peace and with no discordant note to disturb the perfect harmony of relationship between the soul and its Creator. The aim of retreats for the laity is to provide busy people with a favorable opportunity of entering into themselves and examining calmly and honestly how they stand with God and what progress they are making in the business of saving their souls. This is done in an environment well portrayed by the following lines:

*Who'er thou art
That entereth here
Forget the struggling world
And every trembling fear.*

*Take from thy heart
Each evil thought
And all that selfishness
Within thy life hath brought.*

*For once inside this
Place, thou wilt find
No barter, servant's fear
No master's voice unkind.*

*Here all are kin
Of God above,
Thou too dear friend, and here
The Rule of Life is Love.*

When the summer comes the beautiful grounds of Teschemakers, of Timaru, and Remuera will once more be at the disposal of ladies who desire to withdraw from the world for a short time and give themselves wholly up to the adjustment of their spiritual interests. Retreats in Teschemakers are of newer institution than in the other centres, but they that have been privileged to spend a few days within the boundaries of St. Patrick's College, near Oamaru, will be eager to go back again and to bring with them their friends in order to benefit by the spiritual lessons to be learned in the beautiful Convent chapel or among the shaded walks in this place of peace and restfulness.

The Christian Home

Nowadays when at the instigation of an association of bigots the Massey Government attacks the foundations of the Christian home one cannot too often insist on the truth that, as the home is the nucleus of the State, the State will be as its homes are: good homes make for a sound commonwealth, and bad homes make for a place like New Zealand has become under the rule of the tools of the bigots. From St. John

Chrysostom we borrow a few ideas which will help to remind our readers of what the true home ought to be, of what it would be in a country in which religion was encouraged instead of being driven from the hearts of the young as is done here by the Hanans and the Parrs and *omne id genus*. Chrysostom lays down first of all that the atmosphere of the home must be love—tender, constant, protecting, devoted, faithful love, inspired by the love of Christ, stronger than death, and a flame that many waters shall not quench. In the next place it must be recognised that for the welfare of the home a clear line must be drawn between the duties and activities of man and woman. "For the husband," he says, "the forum, the tribunals, the councils, the cultivation of the fields, and war; for the wife, the spinning wheel, the needle, the supervision of the servants, the care of the kitchen, the early education of the children." The wife may have to go out now and then, but her place is within the home, where she must learn to live in a tranquil atmosphere proper for the encouragement of prayer and recollection which are necessary for all but especially for women. If the wife lives thus, whether the husband returns in the evening, bearing the fruits of his toil, gladdened by good fortune, with perhaps some item of good news, or, it may be, weary, disheartened, and downcast, he will find at home to welcome him a wife who will dissipate his care, calm his uneasiness, and console him in trouble; for there is no power on earth like that of a good woman to guide her husband and lead him right. When he will hearken to the words of no other person in the world a good woman's voice will always be music in his ears, because it has a special force and because it vibrates with love. It may be slow, it may be hidden, but great is the power of a woman over her husband, to convert him, to reform him, to make him better. On the other hand, equally great is woman's power for evil. God has given her seductive arts that may be used for good, but they may also be used for ruin. Sometimes God allows a bad woman's wiles to be a means of punishment for a man's sin's; more often the misfortune is due to the man himself. Did he look for moral loveliness, for purity, for fortitude, for meekness when he was selecting the mother of his children? Was he led on by a mere passion, or perhaps by avarice? Was his marriage a marriage of self-interest, rather than of true love? Too often the miseries of married life are the results of a choice with which God had nothing to do, and when passion burns out and exterior attractiveness withers a life-long punishment remains. The good Christian will choose wisely, knowing that the choice is endless and that only death can dissolve the bond. And a wise choice is the best foundation for the home that the young people will enter when they leave father and mother and brother and sister, to be henceforth one in body and soul, united in that mystic union which is the symbol of the union of Christ with the Church. The young husband ought to say to the young wife, in the words of Abraham to Sarah:

We are going to lead a common life, let virtue be common to us also; I have chosen you for my helpmate, let us also be helpmates in the higher things.

The following words from the great Frederic Ozanam commend themselves to those who are tempted to yield to discouragement. "Beware," he says, "for this is the peril of loyal souls and noble hearts—beware of despairing of your age; beware of that faint-heartedness which leads so many to give up all effort when witnessing as they say the decline of civilization, and who by dint of announcing the approach of their country's ruin, end by precipitating it."

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