

have overcome the world."

"This became the work of the Only Begotten, to unite the divided and to reconcile the alienated": thus St. John Chrysostom (*in Matt.* 5, 9). Or again, St. Jerome: "The peacemakers are called blessed because first in their own hearts and then among their divided brethren they make peace" (*in loco*).

On the seventh day God rested from the works that he had made; the seventh of the beatitudes of the Son of God establishes the new rest, the inheritance of the peacemakers who participate in the Son's work of love and reconciliation. *Septimo loco beatitudo haec ponitur, quia in sabbato verae requiei dabitur pax, sex aetatibus transactis.* Thus a Gloss of the twelfth century. The fascination of number has indeed maddened many who have written of God, as hundreds of commentaries on the Apocalypse bear witness. Yet there is a perfection which we call number, the ordering of things in a proper harmony, which becomes the author of all harmony. Speaking of the number seven in the Apocalypse, Père Allo has remarked: "The agents of the new economy established by the Incarnation are always seven, the number of fulness, of the new and perfect creation" sc. the 7 Spirits of God, the 7 Angels, the 7 Churches. We may, then, without danger of seeming fanciful, see in the seventh beatitude the declaring of the perfection and unity of the new creation, just as the seventh day rest of the Creator declares the perfection and unity of the first creation. "This shall be the record of the love of God and the love of our neighbour," says S. Leo, "that we shall suffer no calamities, be in fear of no offence, but all the strife of trial ended, rest in God's most perfect peace."

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## A TREATISE ON THE INEFFABLE MYSTERY OF OUR REDEMPTION

BY

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE UNIVERSAL MISERY AND FALL OF THE HUMAN RACE

When beginning to speak in detail of this ineffable Mystery of our Redemption, we must presuppose that it was the remedy and medicine for the universal fall and misery of mankind, and especially of the original sin through which mankind remained perverted and crippled. Since we cannot estimate the efficacy of a medicine unless we realise how serious is the malady, we must consider this first. For this we must understand first principles.

In order to understand this doctrine, we must take as its

foundation the immense goodness of our Lord God, which is the principle of all His works and more particularly of this, which for its excellence is called the Work of God. As it is the nature of goodness to communicate its properties, it may be inferred that that supreme Goodness, which is the Divinity, is supremely communicative. Therefore, not content with having bestowed on His creatures their being and all they need to preserve it, His magnificence so surpassed this that, not satisfied with bestowing on them created gifts, He sought to add to them uncreated blessings, that is, communication and participation in his own bliss and glory. With this intention God created two kinds of beings, noble and capable of such great honour, namely, the angels, purely spiritual, and men who are both spiritual and corporeal. The latter, though on a much lower grade than the angels, equal them in the dignity of their final end.

We will say no more of the angels as they do not concern our subject but speak of men who were created by God for this destiny. Since God's works are perfect and ordained with supreme wisdom, as He destined them for this end, He provided them with all the graces and perfections such a dignity required. First He imbued them with His grace and the qualities that proceed from it, so that their souls were pleasing and beautiful in His sight and the virtues made them apt and willing to act rightly. Not content with this, God created them in original justice, a royal crown that gave them mastery over all animals, which were subject to them, over death and all the ills which lead to it, and more than that, bestowed on man control over all his bodily appetites and desires, which in this happy state submitted to the will as easily as the limbs obey the body. The Creator told Adam that if he was faithful and obedient, he and his descendants would enjoy these privileges, which they would otherwise forfeit.

Then the devil, with a rabid jealousy of mankind who were to succeed him in the place he had lost, deceived the woman and through her perverted the man and made him break the divine commandment. By this sin Adam and Eve lost the graces and virtues God had given them, and with these their mastery over their body and its appetites. They understood at once that they were naked, and were ashamed. They made themselves clothing of the leaves of the trees, for they felt the penalty of their sin at once.

Man, in the state to which disobedience had brought him, engendered us all in the same condition (as St. Augustine says on Psalm 132). Mortal, he begot mortals, infirmity the infirm, miserable his gift is misery; evil inclinations are our lot, from a sinner we inherit sin, and are subjects of the devil to whom he subjected himself, and finally we share his nakedness, not so much of clothing as of justice and grace.

Nor is it strange that the children of the first man are born without the original grace and justice which he lost, for as the knight who betrays his king loses his estate and family inheritance, involving them all in the loss as a traitor's sons, so when the first man disloyally rose against his God, he was deprived of the great dignity he had received and we lost it through him. This, then, is the miserable condition in which man remained through sin.

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*The disorder of self-love that follows sin and the army of desires born of it.*

From the privation of this dignity, that is of the privileges and graces man lost by sinning, another great evil is born. It is right that the creature should love its Creator more than itself and all else, as the limbs prefer the head to themselves and allow themselves to be amputated for its sake. But this is not so in this case. In fact, all men are born warped, crippled and monstrous, that is with an habitual inclination to love themselves and their possessions more than God, so that they turn from God from their birth and seek themselves by their disordered liking. This crippling and disorder is called by theologians original sin, in which we are all conceived. This is told us in chapter 25 of holy Job. Our version gives, "Can he that is born of woman appear clean?"; the Septuagint translation says that no one is clean from sin, even an infant of a day old. The royal Prophet, to lessen the blame of his sin, exclaimed, "Behold I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother conceive me" (Ps. 50, 7). He calls original sin *sins* because, though it may be one sin in act, it includes all sins potentially (note St. Augustine), for they all come from this evil root of ill-ordered love, the origin of every sin. Men do not sin idly but for the sake of some interest or pleasure that this wrong desire aspires to, showing their need of divine grace in order to avoid sin, as holy Job says: "Who can make him clean that is conceived of unclean seed? Is it not thee who only art?" (Job 14, 4).

This, then, is the ailment common to the human race. Its reality and gravity is proved by our difficulty in acting conformably to our nature. When we see that a bird cannot fly, or a fish swim, or a horse trot, or can only do so with difficulty, we know it has some disease that prevents its natural action. But it is much more fitting that the rational creature should live by reason, that is should live a good life, and we see how few Christians do so. Who cannot see that the creature which cannot perform, or has great difficulty in performing its natural actions must be ailing? Then what is more just, more obligatory, or more conformable to the whole law of nature than to love above all things that sovereign Lord of all the Universe in

whom we live and move and have our being, and without whose help we could neither breathe nor open our mouth? Yet we see this the last thing done by worldly men, though it ought to be preferred to all else with infinite profit to themselves. What could better testify man's common ailment? Man has soul and body—a body in common with the beasts and a soul as angels have, though the latter is far more precious. Yet all his feelings, cares and labour are employed in the service and happiness of the body, which will die to-morrow, and the soul which will live for ever, either in perpetual glory or ceaseless torment, is neglected. Who would be so blind as not to see how these and other forms of insanity bring corruption and spiritual disease on human nature that fails in what is so congenial, natural and necessary for its life? When we see a creature feeding greedily on soil, we know it is diseased or its appetite would not be so unnatural. But what is more contrary and pernicious for a rational being than sin, which is opposed to all right reason? And since most men have these appetites so contrary to their nature, for we see little else in the world but sin upon sin, crime upon crime, can we doubt the disease of a nature that hungers for such dangerous food?

If we wish to discover the root of this corruption we must not look at Christians who hold the Faith, or at men who live under rulers or laws which prevent their doing as they wish, but at the Masters of the world who recognise no superior nor have any resistance offered to their desires. Truly there have been many: Sardanapalus, Nero, Caligula, and Heliogabalus, Phalaris and other similar monsters. Among them is Xerxes, King of the Persians, a man of most dissolute life. Who cannot see by such examples how corrupt and vitiated is our nature?

The Creator cannot be blamed for this corruption. For He who is supremely perfect and good created all things good and perfect, each in its kind. Thus after having ceased to create, Scripture says, God saw all the things that He had made, and they were *very* good (Gen. 1, 31), not merely *fairly* good. But the sin and disobedience of man who wished to be "as gods" caused him to lose the natural rectitude and justice in which God had created him, and through him we too lost it. It is said that if, when planting a vine, a little scammony is injected into the root, all the grapes it produces contain that gum and are as dangerous to eat as scammony. We can imagine that this poison of sin entered the first man, who was the root and origin of mankind, and, affecting the root, the father of us all, extended to all his children. As St. Augustine says, "Thus the human race was lost when the man perished who contained it all; for he engendered us in his fallen state." It is the common law of the nations that children take the rank of their parents; the son of a

noble is a nobleman, the son of a peasant is a peasant; a free mother's child is free, and a slave mother's is a slave.

This grace being lost, the bridle that controlled our inclinations and desires, they all, like a runaway horse, became wild and rebelled against the soul to punish man's disobedience and rebellion against his Creator.

(To be continued)

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## REVIEWS

ENGLISH PRAYER BOOKS. By Stanley Morison. (Cambridge University Press; 6s.)

The title of this admirable book may easily be misunderstood, especially by those who have not been brought up to refer the term "prayer book" primarily to the *Book of Common Prayer*. Mr. Stanley Morison in fact deals, not with all sorts of prayer books, not solely with prayer books in the English language, but principally with the official service books of the pre-Reformation Church in this country, of the Church of England, and of Roman Catholics since the Reformation, especially those used in the celebration of the Lord's Supper and other rites of public worship.

The satisfaction given by the publication of this book is four-fold; it is a very good book; it is a further example of the splendid work being done by our university publishers amid the stress of present tyrannies; it witnesses to the continued strength of the recognition of the supreme importance of public worship for Christians; and it witnesses also to a growing consciousness that this worship must not be regarded simply statically and "traditionally." For *English Prayer Books* is the first of a series "Problems of Worship," of which the general editors are the Dean of St. Paul's and the Dean of Liverpool, whose scope is "to outline in a series of small books, written by members of various churches, the essentials of worship as they have developed in the course of Christian history; to consider the nature and form of any supplementary services that more recent experience may have suggested; and to discuss the desirability of special services designed for limited groups as additions to the regular services intended for the general public."

The first part of this task, to describe the origin and development of existing service books and rites from a bibliographical point of view, has been entrusted to a Roman Catholic, and it is difficult to believe that it could have been done more satisfactorily than Mr. Morison has done it. From the earliest times, through the period of the Gregorian service books, the proliferation of "uses" in the Western Church during the later middle ages, the appearance of service books in English at the Reformation, the adoption of the Tridentine Roman Missal and Breviary by Eng-