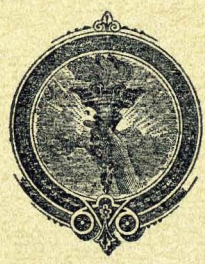


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**THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE
OF THE PRIEST**

ITS DUTIES AND ITS DANGERS



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BY

ARTHUR W. LITTLE, L. H. D.

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To
the younger
Clergy and Candidates
for Holy Orders in the Amer-
ican Church this Lecture is lovingly
dedicated by one who hopes that he may at
least exemplify the sentiment of Horace:
"Fungar vice cotis, acutum reddere
quæ ferrum valet,
excors ipsa
secandi."

ERRATUM.

Page 30, last line, for "*vitere*" read "*vitare*."

PREFACE.

This lecture was delivered before the students of The Western Theological Seminary, in Chicago, and has been listened to with approval by several convocations of clergy.

The priestly life is many-sided. The priest is a *λειτουργός* in the Sanctuary, a "prophet" in the pulpit, the rector of the parish, a pastor and physician of souls to the individuals of the congregation, a teacher of Christ's little ones, the friend of sinners, the helper of the poor, the sick, the sorrowful, an "ensample to the flock," and a leader and moulder of thought in the community, to say nothing of other offices he may be called on to fill. "Who is sufficient for these things?"

In this brief lecture the author does not attempt a treatise on Pastoral Theology. He emphasizes a single duty which calls for emphasis in these days.

Libraries, colleges, universities, divinity schools abound, and are better equipped than

ever before. But the rising generation has caught the *scabies festinandi*. Boys, with the bare rudiments of English, step at once into technical and professional schools, to rear the superstructure of legal, medical and even theological education on a foundation of sand and mud. Even our colleges, with their splendid curriculums, offer also all manner of eclectic short-cuts to degrees, while a noxious athleticism blooms, like the deadly night-shade, in "the olive grove of Academe."

The American Church is making great efforts not only to maintain, but to raise the standard of clerical learning. The Roman Church within our borders is doing the same; and so are several of the great Protestant bodies, notably the Presbyterians, who have always maintained a high standard of education and culture.

While this lecture is written by a priest and for priests of the Anglo-Catholic Church, it is written in a spirit of courtesy, respect and love for all earnest young men who are conscientiously striving to fit themselves to preach Christ and Him crucified.

The priest in holy orders, the priest at the Altar, has a life separate, distinct, apart from all others. But in the purely *intellectual* life—

in the seminary, the study, the pulpit, the press—we are all subject to the same laws of thought; we must follow substantially the same methods; we must guard against the same dangers.

Priests and preachers alike will be stronger and better, if they will cultivate the spirit of “moral thoughtfulness” which Dr. Arnold used to inculcate at Rugby—“the inquiring love of truth going along with the divine love of goodness.”

A. W. L

Advent, 1896.

THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE OF THE PRIEST—ITS DUTIES AND ITS DANGERS.

Let us meditate together, and, as it were, think aloud on this important theme: The Intellectual Life of the Priest—Its Duties and Its Dangers.

The spirit of Christianity is particularly favorable to intellectual things. "Add to your virtue *knowledge*" is the injunction of the blessed¹ apostle. Perhaps the best historical comment on this text is the sublime sentence of Daniel Webster:

"Since the introduction of Christianity it has been the duty as it has been the effort of the great and good, to sanctify human knowledge, to bring it to the Font, and to baptize learning into Christianity—to gather up all its products, its earliest and its latest, its blossoms and its fruits, and lay them all upon the altar of religion and virtue."

¹ St. Matt. xvi, 17.

Notice that the Catholic Church, though at the start she contained "not many wise men after the flesh," though she was "to the Greeks foolishness," nevertheless soon made herself felt in the world not only as a religious, but as an intellectual power. Growth in grace became growth in knowledge. To Pentecostal virtue learning was added. Then were laid the foundations of the first institutions of Christian education. The Catechetical School of Alexandria—founded by St. Mark, and adorned by Athenagoras, Pantænus, Clement, Origen—the Cathedral Schools of Antioch and Edessa, with others, became strong centers of religion and learning, and were the parents of the parish and public school, the germ of the Christian college, university and theological seminary. Then began the long procession of Christian scholars, men of saintly lives, who added to their virtue knowledge. Then shone forth the sound and churchly piety of an Ignatius; the chaste philosophical acumen of a Justin Martyr; the scriptural and theological devotion of an Irenæus; the cogent and fervid logic of a Tertullian; the prodigious and inexhaustible and unparalleled learning of an Origen; the unconquerable, enthusiastic, triumphant faith of an

Athanasius; the learned, practical and beneficent ecclesiasticism of a Cyprian and an Ambrose; the stern, towering, indefatigable talent of a Jerome; the supreme, universal, immortal excellence of an Augustine; and the hallowed genius and consecrated eloquence of a Chrysostom. And thence onward to our own times, the natural succession of Catholic scholars runs side by side with that other and diviner succession—to which they have ever paid the homage of consentient and supporting testimony—the apostolic succession of bishops in the Church of God.

It is fitting, then, that we ponder and obey the command of St. Peter; that, possessing first a virtue born of faith—the holiness without which it is impossible to please God—we add thereto, as best we may, “all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

It is true we should love and seek knowledge for the glory of God and for Truth's own sake. But we should pursue it also, first, for our own sake; and, secondly, for the sake of others.

I.

For our own sake, because it is a duty and a delight to cultivate and enrich our minds, to

develop all our powers, to make the most of ourselves. Professor Huxley's ideal of a man of liberal education ought to fit (though often it does not) the mental condition of the clergy. "A man," says he, "whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine, with all its parts of equal strength, and in smooth working order; ready, like a steam engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind." This aspect of the priest's intellectual life has reference not to the accumulation of knowledge, but to the *disciplining* of the mind, its perfect subjection to the will, which I venture to call *mental mastery*. Milton put many wise sayings into Lucifer's mouth, but none wiser than this:

"To be weak is miserable, doing or suffering."

Subordinately to what we owe to God and to humanity, we owe it to ourselves—our happiness, our self-respect demands it—to be intellectually strong and skillful, and superior to those over whom we may be placed,

διεν ἀριστευεῖν καὶ ὑπεύροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων,

to know how to manage the stops and handle the keys of this wonderful organ, the Brain. Who of us has not seen in others, or perhaps bitterly experienced in himself, the mortification of find-

ing that, at some critical juncture, Memory disobeys the will, like Napoleon's ill trained eagle refusing at the vital moment to perch on the shoulder? How often a pastor, who ought at all times to merit and retain the respect of his people, finds himself cornered by the innocent query of a devout Sunday School teacher, or entrapped into some historical, logical, or theological blunder by the shrewd, sarcastic interrogation of a skeptical layman or wily controversialist!

Learning and culture and mental training are no longer the monopoly of the clergy. Unless we are content to be humiliated by the consciousness that we are intellectually weak, and that our people are aware of it, and can truthfully say, with David, "I am wiser than all my teachers," we must have our minds not only well stored with knowledge, but *well trained*, logical, keen, retentive, accurate and withal *quick*. A ready memory, rapid powers of argument and illustration and a quick wit are of inestimable value even to the most pious and learned cleric. Learned minds are sometimes practically useless from the slowness of their movements, like the muscular apprentice who lost his place at the forge, because he could not

wink fast enough to keep the sparks out of his eyes.

For all this mental discipline of which I have spoken one of the best studies—alas! the one least cultivated by the clergy—is mathematics, especially geometry. Suffer a word of exhortation:

Keep up your mathematics, not necessarily so that you could pass examinations in algebra and trigonometry and the calculus, but so as to keep your minds familiar with the *reasoning processes* of the science of number, quantity and magnitude in their manifold relations and far reaching effects. Mathematics is one of the divinest of sciences. A grasp of its wonderful, inexorable, all-powerful, omnipresent laws—accounting for the harmony of sounds and of colors, explaining the vibrations of atoms, and the orbital sweep of planets and suns, directing the movements of a snail and the lightning's flash; measuring, dominating, conditioning everything, in space and in time, in the realm of matter and in the spirit-world—a grasp, I say, of its fundamental laws gives one an insight into the very nature and operations of God Himself, into the immanent and the economic relations of the Adorable Trinity, which can in no other

way be obtained. There is much truth in the philosophy of Pythagoras, and the undevout mathematician is mad.

It would, of course, be a waste of time for busy priests to bother themselves with ciphering, to reduce equations and to play with logarithms. But once or twice a year to skim over our old Euclid or Loomis, and especially to review the processes of Astronomy, those battles in the sky and how they were won—not taking pains to work out problems, but merely to understand the *reasoning* involved—is a mental tonic, a quickening of the imagination, an exhilarating exercise in logic, an intellectual *παλιγγενεσία*, a religious inspiration.

Intellectual pursuits not only discipline and develop our powers, but they offer to us busy priests, in the midst of the routine and monotony of parish work, the trials, the disappointments and the cares of ministerial life, the best recreation, the most fruitful, most elevating, most proper; a recreation, too, which need never conflict with our spiritual life and private exercises of devotion.

Here the “humanities,” the amenities of literature, have their special use and blessing for us. An hour spent with Homer or Plato or Æs-

chylus; with Cicero or Virgil or Horace; with Dante or Shakespeare or Milton; Goethe or Schiller; Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning; or with any of the best poets, novelists, essayists, historians of any language at our command, is a better, more agreeable, more profitable recreation than we can get at whist, chess or checkers, or from the small talk of society. As Erasmus said of Cicero's treatises: *Ab his sentio me reddi meliorem*,—I know that they make me a better man.

And here I say it seems to me a duty that the clergy of the church should keep up at least a fair degree of familiarity with the three sacred tongues. When our dear Lord was crucified, Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And St. John tells us, "It was written in Hebrew and Greek and Latin," the languages spoken by the three great races of men, amongst whom, as in the "three measures of meal," the leaven of the Gospel was to work.

With the exception of a few marked men who have received special "dispensations" from their bishops, all the priests of the American Church have studied these three languages.¹

¹ See Digest of the Canons.

The benefit of the study is incalculable. It calls for no defense from me.

But do we sufficiently keep up the study? Do we build, as we ought, on the sacred linguistic attainments of our collegiate and seminary days? We all leave college with the idea of "keeping up our classics," and the divinity school with noble resolutions as to reading a little Hebrew every day. But alas for these resolutions, especially the latter!

True, there is much beside lack of time to be offered in excuse. Latin and Greek have, in most American academies and colleges, been taught by a false method. If a professor of modern languages should set up to teach French or German in such a way, he would never have a pupil. Two or three years ought to suffice for any sane man to master a foreign language so as to read it with facility. Yet I have seen collegians, who, after seven years' study of Latin and Greek, could not, on the day of graduation, read the Latin of their diplomas, without a dictionary, or translate at sight a page of Zenophon or Plato. But in spite of faulty methods I unhesitatingly regard the Classics as the most important study of the college course, not only for

mental discipline and literary training, the mastery of the principles of language and the acquirement of style, but also for the resources of perpetual and lofty delectation which they make our own.

If we have just enough knowledge of Greek and Latin to read with a fair degree of facility, there is opened up to us an unfailing source of enjoyment, recreation and culture. The English clergy have, as a rule, been good classics. Let not the *Anglo-classical* spirit die out on this side the water.

As to the Fathers, I am inclined to think that, unless we are quite familiar with *patristic* Greek and Latin, it is best for us to read them, for the most part, in a good English version.

It is hard to speak with patience of the recent tendency to disparage the study of Greek; and I note, with thankfulness, the beginning of a healthy reaction in many quarters. Believe me, *liberal education (so called), without the thought, the art, the language, the culture of Greece, is but intoxicated Philistinism.* Without Greek it is simply impossible to be a New Testament scholar.

For Anglo-Catholics Latin has a peculiar and hereditary charm. We cannot forget that,

for many centuries, our Mother Church in England made Latin the vehicle of almost all her public devotions. The "Uses" of Salisbury, Hereford, Bangor, York, Lincoln and others—differing slightly among themselves, and all differing from the Roman Use (though belonging to the same Western *Rite*)—were to our fathers, who had them and could read Latin, what the Book of Common Prayer is to us.

When English had become a language sufficiently settled for liturgical purposes, we were guided, I believe, by the Spirit of God, in translating our ancient Liturgy and offices into the vernacular, as in the Prayer Book of 1549. Yet it was no part of the mind of the Church to discard the theological and devotional language of the West, except so far as public offices for the benefit of the laity were concerned. The English clergy are required by law to say the daily offices; but if no congregation be present, it is still lawful for them to say them in Latin; and on several occasions the authorities, both in Church and in State, have sought to encourage this wise and salutary practice.¹ The First

¹It is earnestly to be hoped that the prudent and practical bishop of New York, when he carries out his plan of the many "Chapels of the Tongues" in his vast

Prayer Book of Edward VI was issued in Latin in 1551. That of Elizabeth (1558) was translated back into Latin, and set forth in 1560 for use in the universities and chief public schools. That of 1662, the present Prayer Book of the Church of England, was excellently "Latinized" by Dr. Durel, Dean of Durham, in 1670. This was the best translation until 1865, when Bright and Medd put forth their superb LIBER PRECUM PUBLICARUM, the later editions of which contain, in the appendix, the Mass of the first Reformed Book, and the Scottish and American Liturgies.

The Convocation of Canterbury has never ceased to have the office and sermon at the opening of its sessions in Latin.¹ Some Latin offices and hymns still linger in English schools and

Cathedral, may assign one Chapel to the reverent use of the Hebrew Liturgy, for the benefit of converted Jews; one to the Greek and other oriental rites, for which there is an obvious need; and one to the Latin tongue, for the benefit of liberal Romanists, educated foreigners who are not familiar with English, and New York collegians who would surely be attracted—a chapel (if I may so apply the words of Milton) "*Quo neque lingua procaz vulgi penetrabit.*"

¹ It was the writer's privilege once to witness a grand opening function of Convocation in the Cathedral of Lon-

colleges, and a Latin sermon is preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, at the beginning of each term.

So far as the clergy are concerned, I do not hesitate to apply the words of Cicero: "*Non enim tam præclarum est scire Latine quam turpe nescire.*"¹

A word as to modern languages. Many of us—perhaps most of us—are unable to read with facility even French and German. Why? Because we have the idea that there is no use in learning a modern language, unless we learn to speak it with accuracy and elegance. This is a delusion and a snare. Mark my words, for I speak that I do know. Unless we are to reside in foreign parts, or unless we are to minister in

don. Rarely, if ever, in the great churches of the continent does one hear Latin sung so sweetly and so reverently as this office and three or four ancient hymns of the church were sung by the heavenly choir of St. Paul's. One was tempted to cry out with Scipio, when he heard the music of the spheres: "*Quis hic, quis est qui complet aures meas tantus et tam dulcis sonus?*" [Som. Scip. V.] The Dean of Wells preached a sound, practical and elegant Latin sermon on the text: "*Ubi Spiritus Domini, ibi libertas*" [II Cor. iii, 17.]; and the venerable and beloved Primate—may light perpetual shine upon him!—gave the Benediction of peace, his face and his voice like an angel's.

¹ Brutus, XXXVII.

a foreign tongue, we have almost no need to speak any language but English. What then? Do I mean that we have no need to learn other tongues? By no means. Learn to *read* them, whether you learn to speak them or not. The average American priest will not have occasion to *speak* French or German once in ten years; but if he can read these tongues, the treasures of continental literature are his. He can sit at the feet of the great masters of thought and expression of those two diverse but mighty races of men.

A new field of fruitful and attractive study is now opened to us in the natural sciences. Nature is God's universal revelation, God's Greater Bible. And modern scientists have been unlocking its treasures to a degree undreamed of heretofore.

Nearly all the natural sciences have arisen during this century. It is true Astronomy has been a real science ever since the days of Newton. But nearly all the facts and principles of Chemistry, Mineralogy, Meteorology, Botany, Zoölogy, Geology, Paleontology, Anthropology, Biology, and, I may add, Comparative Philology, Archeology, Sociology, and several other sciences have been discovered within a hundred

years and largely in the present generation.

Every well equipped priest will know enough of each of these sciences to be able to read the current literature which treats of them, to talk intelligently concerning them, and not to make a spectacle of himself in the pulpit by brushing aside the facts of Evolution or of Bacteriology as "Oppositions of Science falsely so called."!

The priest should also know something of music, at least ecclesiastical music, something of art, and should cultivate if possible, correct taste in ecclesiastical art, and especially correct taste and practical common sense in Church Architecture, a lack of which on the part of the clergy has allowed carpenters, vestries and architects to cover this fair land with ecclesiastical monstrosities.

But whatever be our knowledge of languages, we ought to avail ourselves of all the time we can spare from the purely religious work of our office for general reading. We should never allow ourselves to grow rusty in Dogmatic Theology, without which we are almost sure to become heretics, and are at best but blind leaders of the blind; in the sacred languages; in Bible studies; in Moral Theology; in Apologetics; in Church History, Liturgics, and Canon Law; in

Secular History and the principles of Common and Civil Law; in Science and Philosophy; in Rhetoric and Oratory; in Poetry and good Fiction; or to neglect contemporary and periodic literature, or Biography. I put Biography last, not as least, but because I wish to emphasize it. It is a kind of literature one can read very rapidly; and a good biography leaves a lasting effect on character. Read, for instance, Walton's "Lives," Hook's "Lives," the lives of Bishops Patteson, Selwyn, and Wilberforce; of Fathers Lowder and Mackonochie, Isaac Williams, Dean Church, and the saintly Keble; of our own Seabury, Muhlenburg, Breck and De Koven; Bishop Green's life of Bishop Otey; Dean Burgon's "Lives of Twelve Good Men"; Morehouse's "Some American Churchmen," and above all Liddon's Life of Pusey. We will each say with Erasmus, as quoted above, "I know that they make me a better man."

In a word, let us keep up studious and literary habits. For our own sake, for our own development, comfort and delectation, for our own recreation and profit let us cultivate and indulge these humanities. "For other employments of the mind," as Cicero observes in his charming defense of the Poet Archias, "are not suited to

every time and age and place. But these studies are the food of youth and the joy of old age; they are the ornament of prosperity, they are the refuge and solace of adversity; they gladden us at home, they are no hinderance to our business life; they are our companions by night, in foreign travel, and in the sweet retirement of country life." And you, young gentlemen, might do worse than to commit to memory those inspiring words of "Rome's least mortal mind:"

"Nam ceteræ neque temporum sunt, neque ætatum omnium, neque locorum. Hæc studia adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis per fugium ac solatium præbent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur."

So much, then, for the getting of knowledge, the disciplining of the mind, and the cultivation of literary and scholarly habits on our own account and for our personal benefit. Well did Eliphaz the Temanite say: "He that is wise may be profitable unto *himself*."

II.

The priest, however, in his intellectual life—the priest, of all men—must not be selfish, must

not forget his duty towards his neighbor. Indeed, *our chief reason for making the most of ourselves looks to things beyond ourselves, viz., to the increasing of our influence for good over our fellow men, for the salvation of souls, to the glory and praise of our Divine Master.*

Knowledge is power. Or, as the wise man puts it: "He that increaseth knowledge increaseth strength." When we remember that "no man liveth unto himself," that every man is his "brother's keeper," that we are the under-shepherds of Christ's Flock, to whom is committed the cure of souls, how we should be aroused and inspired to fit ourselves for the wisest and most successful work in the cause of Christ!

An ignorant priest is but a blind and one-armed shepherd, to whom

"The hungry sheep look up and are not fed,"

while the Chief Shepherd demands: "Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?"

Alas! the precious time which the "hustling" priest of to-day takes from his books, from his sermons, even from his spiritual life, "to serve tables"—to manage guilds and sewing circles, bazaars and five o'clock teas! *διακονεῖν τραπέζαις, διακονεῖν τραπέζαις!* Where are the *deacons*? Is

the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Holy Apostles no longer canonical? Is it an "epistle of straw?" Has Jehoiakim the Son of Josiah cut it out with his penknife?¹

It has been objected that God has no need of human learning. But it is well replied: "If so, He has still less need of human *ignorance*." But (I speak it reverently) God has need of human learning. He has chosen to employ *men*, as ambassadors to their fellow men; and He has uses for their powers of head as well as for their powers of heart and of hand. Did not the early Church need the versatile genius, the vast learning, the cogent reasoning and the persuasive eloquence of St. Paul, as well as his faith and benevolence, his piety and self-control? Has not the knowledge as well as the virtue of St. John proved a power and a blessing to the world?

Take, for example, a boy just through the grammar-school. He is a good Christian; he has faith and virtue, and is resolved to devote his life to the sacred ministry. What says the Church to such a one? "Spend at least ten years in adding to your virtue knowledge—seven years in general academic study and three in Divinity,—that thou mayest labor and teach as 'a work-

¹ Jer. XXXVI, 23.

man that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.' ”

Let us ever be ready to give a reason, and a valid reason, for the hope that is in us. Let us never use a weak, much less a false, argument in defense of the Catholic Faith. What would you think of an officer who should defend a garrison with bows and arrows, while the artillery was at his command and the magazines overflowing with ammunition? But that is precisely a picture of us, if we refuse to add to our virtue knowledge; if we are too ignorant to meet the demands of our prophetic office, and the intellectual requirements of an educated but misguided age.

We owe it, therefore, not only to ourselves, but still more to the Fold of God and the flocks He has committed to our care, to be wise, earnest, thorough, accurate, ready scholars, able to bring forth from the treasures of God and of Nature things new and old.

III.

We have thus far considered the duty of the priest's intellectual life. The picture is roseate and attractive. But there is no rose without a

thorn. Every bright and beautiful thing in life has its dark side.

“Nihil est ab omni
Parte beatum.”

Our intellectual life is not free from temptations, suspicions, dangers; though, I fancy, *our chief danger is laziness and lack of system, which destroy the possibility of all intellectual life worthy the name.*

But granted we are earnest and studious, what are then our special risks?

Well, there is the risk of letting the intellectual outgrow the spiritual and the sympathetic in our lives. The mere scholastic cannot be a good pastor, nor a good preacher, nor, I venture to say, a good Christian.

Next, there is the danger of narrowing our minds by too exclusive attention to some one branch of learning, or of being carried away with “the study of the world and the flesh,” which in our ordination vow we promise to lay aside, “the Lord being our helper.” There is the danger of taking up with hobbies and fads, such as the number of the Beast, the Anglo-Israelitish craze, or other and newer crotchets of the day; of devoting our time to what Pope calls:

“ Learning’s luxury or idleness,
Or tricks to show the stretch of human brain,
Mere curious pleasure or ingenious pain.”

There is the ever-present danger of neglecting our offices, our sermonizing, our pastoral calls, or other duties, so as to save time for reading. I tell you, it takes a strong effort of will to close a fascinating book, to leave a cozy fireside, and on a bleak day walk two or three miles to see a poor sick woman, to labor with some ignorant unbeliever, or to bury in some peculiarly and absurdly inconvenient way the body of a man who had no claim upon the Church or upon us, save the claim of pity. Here are temptations. God grant we may never yield to them!

Then there is the danger of sacrificing our health to our books, of burning too much midnight oil, of neglecting bodily exercise.

There is the temptation to preach too scholarly sermons, to fire over the heads of our people, to “show off.” Or, in the effort to avoid this, there is the risk of letting down too far, of stooping too low, of talking “baby-talk” to intelligent congregations. It is hard to steer between these dangers.

“ Hostesque incurris, dum fugis hostem;
Incidis in Scyllam, cupiens vitare Charybdim.”

Then, too, there is the danger of browsing in poisonous pastures, of eating forbidden fruit. There are books which even the clergy ought not to read. We are all safer and happier if we let heretical, infidel, and other immoral books alone.

And closely connected therewith is the danger of forming false opinions and pernicious habits of mental operation.

All these dangers, however, and many more which might be mentioned, are not, in my humble opinion, the greatest perils of the priest's intellectual life. There are two chief monsters, twin demons, which lurk in academic groves, in monastic cells, in the cloisters of the seminary, in the pastor's study. And they are PRIDE AND DISCOURAGEMENT, or conceit and despair. Sometimes one, sometimes the other, sometimes—strange as it may seem—both together assail a priest at his books, at his desk, in the pulpit; and sometimes enter into him, and dwell there.

Some men, if they attain a little learning, and a little literary success, or find themselves thrown among men who are not quite so bright, or have not had quite so good advantages as themselves, at once grow conceited. They become intellectual Pharisees. The grace of hu-

mility is gone. The grace of charity soon goes. They are most insufferable companions. They are "wiser than all their teachers." They are very apt to become heretics. "Professing themselves wise, they become fools." In short, the devil of intellectual pride has taken possession of them, and "this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

Then that other demon—equally dangerous but not equally repulsive—the demon of discouragement or despair. Sometimes a scholarly priest gets disheartened because God in His inscrutable Providence has allowed him no sphere in which to exercise what seem to be his special gifts of mind. He sees shallow and un-scholarly priests, who are not fit to be his pupils, promoted rapidly to places of influence and honor. He feels like the young, ardent, accomplished Lafayette, before Washington could persuade Congress to assign him a commission. It is easy to say: "Such a one should be content, and accept it all as Divine chastisement." So he should; and so he does. But as he gives up his cherished hopes of usefulness, as he conquers his ambition, as he rises above all envy and jealousy, bowing in humble submission to the

powers that be and are ordained of God, then comes the danger of intellectual discouragement or even despair.

Again (and this is a more frequent occurrence), many of us find that we have less brains than we used to think we had. We find others are better scholars than we. We are not content merely to fill the small intellectual sphere which God has placed us in and fitted us for. We begin to lose our scholarly enthusiasm. We get discouraged. We say to ourselves: "O, what's the use? I can never be even a fifth-rate scholar at best!" And so books are left unread. One after another, studies we had loved are dropped. We try to run the engine of the pulpit with the little fuel already in the furnace. Intellectual growth stops. We begin to use old sermons; are perhaps tempted to borrow too much from others, yes, to plagiarize. Or, when we have gotten to the end of our resources, and have worn every sermon threadbare, we seek a new parish, and use the old, the stale, the worn-out homilies again and again and again. In short, we have let our minds stagnate; we have wasted our time. Nor is it strange if by and by we feel our ignorance and

neglect, grow envious of others, and at last settle down to a sort of cold indifference or intellectual apathy and despair.

I have traced these diseases to their extreme issue. They do not generally run so far. But believe me, each one of us is in danger of at least a slight attack of one or other or both of these deadly ills. God save us from intellectual pride! God save us from intellectual despair! God save us from the beginnings, the first symptoms of these pests; and cure us, though the remedy be heroic!

IV.

I have now endeavored to set before you the duty of the intellectual life incumbent on us as priests, or about to be priests, in the Church of God. First, the duty we owe to ourselves; and second, the duty we owe to the Church and the souls committed to our charge; while I have tried briefly to indicate how these duties may best be performed. I have also pointed out some of the special dangers which beset our intellectual pathway, especially the opposite dangers of pride and discouragement.

But I have not yet told you how, as it seems, to me, these dangers may best be avoided. A

word on this point, and I have done.

Of material and mental safeguards, such as the choice of good books and methods, wise division of our time, regard for all our other duties and our health—in a word, things which can be regulated by the common sense of each individual—I will say nothing, save that pride and discouragement can both be avoided, if we will only remember two things. First, that, as St. Paul says, “they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.”¹ And, second, that God does not ask of us the use of talents which He has not given to us.

The priest, however, has one sovereign safeguard against the dangers of the intellectual life. And that is, to sanctify it; to blend it; I would even say, to *identify* it with his religious life. *Bene orasse*, constant prayer and communion with God, an eye single to His glory, an ever abiding sense of the indelibility of our sacerdotal Orders, are the surest defense against the dangers of the intellectual life.

I have read somewhere of a delinquent cleric who, when rebuked by his Bishop, replied: “’Tis true, my Lord; but then I was off duty?”

¹ II Cor. x, 12.

His lordship answered: "When is a priest off duty?" Let us write those words on our hearts — *When is a priest off duty?* There is no such thing as a sacerdotal furlough. We are "ever in our great Task-master's eye."

In order that all our studies may be sanctified and blessed, we should place the constant prayerful study of God's Holy Word first and foremost in our intellectual work. I have never known a really eminent Christian who was not "mighty in the Scriptures." Let all our studies bear, directly or indirectly, on the Word of God and on the Gospel ministry which He has given us to fulfill.

We are too much inclined to separate between our religious life and our intellectual life and our physical life. To the man of God it is all religious. As St. Paul says: "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God,"¹ and again: "Whatsoever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."² "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."³

Finally, my young brothers, let us listen to

¹ I Cor. x, 31.

² Col. iii, 17.

³ Rom. xii, 11.

the solemn words of the Ordinal, words which give the keynote and the watchword of the priest's intellectual life: "Will you be diligent in Prayers, and in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same, laying aside the study of the world and the flesh?"

"I will endeavor so to do, the Lord being my helper."

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