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MIXED MARRIAGE:

THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT FOR CATHOLICS.

TRANSLATED AND REVISED

FROM THE GERMAN OF THE REV. ALBAN STOLZ,

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PREFACE.



IN the very beginning of the Holy Scriptures we are told that our first parents in Paradise received only one commandment, in accordance with which they were to exercise themselves in the fear and the love of God. The commandment forbade them to eat the fruit of one particular tree, whilst they could eat the fruit of all the others. God had given no other commandments to them because they were in the state of innocence and free from evil inclinations. At present it is entirely different; men have received many commandments, whose object is to make us practise what is good, and avoid what is evil,—since, by our nature, we are inclined to all manner of evil. Hence it is that we are living, as it were, in a whole forest of forbidden trees; that is, the relations and conditions of our life are such, that we are constantly allured into temptation and sin if we do not struggle to deny ourselves. These forbidden trees are of different kinds. Amongst them is one tree which is very much like that forbidden tree in Paradise, inasmuch as it not only makes miserable those who are tempted by it to sin, but injures also their posterity, often indeed for all time. As this tree has a great charm for many young people, and consequently, a very great danger, this little pamphlet has for its aim to raise a voice of warning lest anyone should accept its fatal fruit. That fruit is mixed marriage. I trust that this little pamphlet will be read not only by those who are in danger or exposed to the danger of contracting mixed marriages, but also by others, that they may receive a warning in due time.

I.

THE PROTESTANT EDUCATION OF THE CHILDREN OF A MIXED MARRIAGE.



EVERY married Catholic who agrees that his children shall be brought up Protestants, commits a sin just as great as if he himself had forsaken his faith; nay, even a greater sin, inasmuch as he robs his children and their descendants, and, consequently, many souls of the Catholic faith. The numerous benefits which are lost by abandoning the Catholic faith are of the greatest value.

HOW GREAT THE HARM DONE.

BAPTISM outside the Catholic Church is very doubtful. Baptism, indeed, performed by Protestants is valid if it be administered in the right way, and with the right intentions: but these are very often wanting. Numbers of Protestant ministers do not believe any longer that Christ is the Son of God. If such people, in behalf of the laity, go through with what is external in Baptism, but do not believe in the Holy Trinity or in the effects of Baptism, they can hardly have the right intention; then their Baptism is no Sacrament, and hence the child has no share in the redemption of our Saviour. That Catholic who, being married to a Protestant, agrees that the children shall be brought up in the Protestant communion, undergoes, consequently, the risk of having his or her children baptized invalidly, and therefore, the risk of not having them made Christians even before God. Outside of the fact that the Protestant himself must doubt whether he was baptized validly or not, there

is no doubt that he misses an immense benefit for life and death, namely, the Sacraments of Penance and of the Altar. The Protestants have no priest because they do not believe in the Sacrament of Ordination. Only a Bishop, as a successor of the Apostles, can ordain priests. Ordination bestows on the priest a supernatural power which no man, who is not a priest, can exercise: I mean the power to absolve a repentant sinner. The Saviour said to His Apostles: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." This power is exercised every day in the Confessional. The Protestant does not know where to go when he has sinned grievously; his minister is no better able to give him a valid absolution from his sins than the wife or the maid-servant of the minister. It is the will and the command of God that the sinner shall go to a duly-ordained priest to accuse himself and repent if he wishes to receive absolution from his sins. The Catholic who permits his children to be educated as Protestants deprives them of this Sacrament. The most terrible threat which our Lord made against those Jews who refused to have anything to do with Him was: "You shall die in your sins." If, then, your children die in their sins, it is your own fault, because you permitted them to become Protestants, and, consequently, lose that Sacrament by which the forgiveness of sins can be obtained. The same is true of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. The Saviour Himself says distinctly: "That bread which came from heaven is My Body. Who does not eat My Flesh and drink My Blood has not life in him." The Flesh and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ can never be found in a Protestant church, for the simple reason that the transubstantiation of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of the Son of God only takes place during the Consecration in the Holy Mass. The Protestants receive only ordinary bread and ordinary wine. Therefore, it often happens that the remnants of bread from their communion or last supper are brought into the kitchen, or are given to the poultry. Nay, with

their so-called consecrated hosts they often seal their letters. If you, then, agree to the Protestant education of your children, you deprive them of that greatest of all benefits: a union with their Saviour in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

If any member of a Catholic family die without having received the last Sacraments, it is considered a great misfortune. I was once summoned to a place where a young man had died suddenly whilst at work. The mother lamented not so much the loss of her son as the fact that he died without the last Sacraments. "I would have preferred," she said, "to have seen him brought to a mass of corruption in his bed through sickness, no matter how long continued, than that he should have died unprepared." That woman was right, because the Apostle says: "It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God." All your children will die unprepared if you allow them to be brought up Protestants. The Protestant may die after a long sickness, but he will receive no more of that necessary help, and of that greatest of consolations, the last Sacraments, than if he had died suddenly. And then the same lot may be yours, who have been the party to a mixed marriage, although you are a Catholic. Your Protestant husband, wife, or children will hardly call a Catholic priest, but they will try to quiet you with the consolation that you will get well again; and so you will die in your sins, and especially in that mortal sin that you permitted your children to be brought up Protestants. Oh, it is terrible to fall into the hands of the living God! Your Protestant children, furthermore, lose the highest and holiest religious act of Christianity—the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. All those ceremonies which God ordered to be observed in the Old Testament by Moses, and which were observed by the Jews in the temple of Jerusalem with the greatest pomp, were only figures of the Great Sacrifice of the Son of God on Golgotha, which is repeated really and truly, although in an unbloody manner, in every Holy Mass for the members of the Catholic Church. Therefore,

God destroyed the temple in Jerusalem, and did away with all the sacrifices of the Jews, just as lights are extinguished when the sun rises. And as God blesses all parts of the world with light and warmth by the agency of the sun in twenty-four hours, so He blesses also the whole Catholic world by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, which is offered up, as it were, in a circle around the earth every twenty-four hours, for there is not an hour in which the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is not celebrated somewhere throughout the world; so that now is fulfilled what God said by the mouth of the prophet Malachy: "From the rising of the sun to the setting of the sun there shall be a clean sacrifice offered up to My name." Now, then, all the adoration, praise, and glory which in the Holy Mass are given to the Divine Majesty, all the remission of sins and the blessings on soul and body which the Son of God asks for us in the Holy Mass by the continual oblation of His precious Body and Blood, from all this your children are excluded, and, are, besides trained to that belief in which the Holy Mass is villified by the satanic words: "It is accursed idolatry!"

—*Luther.*

The Blessed Virgin Mary is, amongst all created beings, the one most pleasing to God. From her the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity took His human nature, and became forevermore, for all eternity, man, without ceasing to be God. The Blessed Virgin then having given birth to the God-Man, in whom the Divine Nature and the human nature are united in a oneness of Person, and that Person Divine, she is the Mother of God. God, therefore, sent His angel to salute her with the words: "Hail, full of grace; the Lord is with Thee! Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus." God has selected Mary, and bestowed on her the greatest grace which God can bestow on a created being, since she is free from all stain of sin, and perfect in all virtue. The angels are indeed also sinless, and serve God in happiness, and with eternal fidelity. But there is a merit the Cherubim and Seraphim do not

possess, which is found in the Blessed Virgin in the highest degree. She has for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, suffered such sorrows and trials, as have only been surpassed by the sufferings of our Lord Himself in behalf of mankind. But the angels have never suffered anything for God. Therefore, the love of God for the Blessed Virgin Mary is the greatest, because she is the worthy, faithful, sorrowful Mother of His Divine Son. If we, therefore, love and honor the Blessed Virgin Mary, we are in harmony with God's will, because God loves and honors her above all other creatures. And if we call on her now for her intercession, we may be confident that the Mother of mercy, by her intercession, will give more effect to our prayers, and that God will hear us the sooner. Innumerable and even miraculous aids have been bestowed on Catholics in all ages and in all places, who, with confidence, have implored assistance of the Mother of God. But, in their miserable infatuation, Protestants have been led by the so-called reformers into a refusal to honor and invoke the Mother of the Saviour. She, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, once said: "From henceforth all nations shall call me blessed." The prophecy is now verified in all parts of the world; a hundred millions hail her daily with the angelic salutation. Amongst all baptized Christians, Protestants alone refrain from saluting and praising the Blessed Virgin. They take their stand, as it were, before the church door, and as often as the Mother of God is venerated in prayer or song, they become deaf and dumb, as if an unclean spirit had taken possession of them. To the number of such misguided men, you add your children. As often as you say the "Our Father" with them, and then would go on to the "Hail Mary, full of grace," they are angered and are silent, and they will turn their backs upon you, that is, if they are true to their Protestant teachings. But, furthermore, the Mother of God is lost to your children, inasmuch as they will never, their whole lives long, receive the true Holy Com-

munion. The Lord Himself says: "Whoever eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood abideth in Me, and I in him." Therefore, we become, by means of a worthy Holy Communion, members of Christ, and, consequently, children of His holy Mother. Protestants, then, having no real and true Holy Communion, never become members of Christ, and, consequently, never enter into relationship with His holy Mother. As often as you hear the Angelus bell ring, your conscience must reproach you, if it has not reached the last degree of callousness, with the awful fact: "It is my fault that my children are not children of the Blessed Virgin, and that they do not honor and invoke her." Hence, you may as well give your Rosary away to the Catholic child of another; it is of no use to you any longer. You and it would only be objects of ridicule to your Protestant family, and the Mother of God can take no pleasure in your devotion since you have shown yourself so faithless to her.

Nor is this all that is to be said. Besides Baptism, man, in order to be saved, needs most faith in Christ. But this faith itself can be lost to your children, and with it the last mainstay of Christianity, if they are brought up Protestants. Nowadays there are Protestant ministers without number who do not believe any more in Christ than a Jewish rabbi does. Such ministers will instil the poison of unbelief into their hearers, and bring them to a total rejection of Christianity. In this way many a congregation has a wolf for its pastor, who does not feed his flock with Christian doctrine, but kills their souls by depriving them of faith, which is the root and source of Christian life and Christian love. Whoever, then, kills faith destroys the life of the soul, and takes away the conditions for eternal beatitude. It is a terrifying thought, as terrifying as a gust from the sulphuric depths of hell, and one, therefore, that ought to make every Catholic shrink with horror from ever agreeing to have his children brought up Protestants, that: "As often as I look at my Protestant children, and am mindful of my religion, so often do I feel the reproach that it

was through my fault that they have been robbed of their inheritance of the Catholic religion, and that their souls are without life, because deprived of the nourishment of Christian doctrine and grace. The very sight of my children will not only give me no pleasure, but will be as a goad to my conscience, if that conscience of mine be not already dead."

HOW GREAT THE GUILT.

EVERY sin committed by man is especially grievous: 1) If it affects the religion and spiritual welfare of others. 2) If it is committed with full knowledge and after full deliberation. 3) If the motive is vile and wicked.

In every one of these three respects the consent of a Catholic to the Protestant education of his children is a fearfully grievous sin. You commit an outrage both against God and against your children. Were a person to murder his child, he would only kill the body and take away earthly life; but you rob your children of the source of sin-remission, the Holy Sacraments, and you turn them out of their mother Church, as it were, into the arid desert, since the more faithless their future minister, the more probable it is that the souls of your children will be lost. You will not have, at the day of judgment before God, the excuse of many a poor sinner, that you have sinned out of ignorance or thoughtlessness. Your sin has, in this respect, like a false oath, a particular malice that cries to heaven for vengeance, because you have sinned before God with knowledge and forethought. The Catholic party has been warned by his pastor, and the more conscientious the latter is, the more earnest has he been in his warning. Nor have your own relatives and friends been wanting in their expostulations with you. And if there is but the first instinct of Catholic faith in you, your own conscience will trouble you day and night.

You may try to silence it with excuses and pretexts;

you may read papers and books intentionally written against the Catholic faith; you may read novels, poems, frequent theatres and gay companies, and thus you may more and more stifle your conscience. But among the sins against the Holy Ghost is this: To have a heart hardened against salutary admonitions. Such a hardened heart they possess, who, despite the warnings of their conscience, yet consent that their children be cast off from the rock of the Catholic Church into the cold and tempestuous waters of Protestantism.

Finally, God judges our actions according to our intentions. Even our good works are worthless before the Almighty, nay, we shall be punished for them, if a bad or an unrighteous intention has accompanied them. In the case of mortal sin, however, whenever it is committed knowingly and deliberately, the intention is always bad. This is especially true of the grievous sin of consenting that the children be brought up as Protestants. The Catholic party may agree to this out of love towards the other party, but that means to exchange the true and living God for a creature, like unto whom millions have lived on earth and have died after a few years, leaving naught but dust behind them. Or the Catholic party marries because the Protestant party has money. In this case it is generally the fault of the avaricious parents, who persuade daughter or son to marry a rich Protestant. Such fathers and mothers are like the satanic serpent in Paradise, because they persuade their daughter or son to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree of mixed marriage. Therefore, St. Paul writes: "Those who want to become rich, will fall into the folds of the devil." Such Catholics sell their most precious inheritance: their claim to heaven, for money, which has no more value than the mess of pottage of the heedless Esau. It is also often the case that a suitor with a small income, in order to win a wealthy Protestant, makes over to her, as a dowry, the education of the children in Protestantism; or he agrees to the same through policy that he may be the sooner promoted to offices

of trust or emolument by a Protestant government. It is frequently the case in Germany, that a public officer confesses openly that he has his children educated as Protestants, in order to be favored by his superiors. The words of Christ: "Seek first the kingdom of heaven and its justice, and all things else shall be added unto you,"—these words they have perverted into the destructive maxim of anti-christ: "Seek first the goods of this world, and all things else will be added unto you." They will assuredly find out in eternity what is meant by "all things else" promised them by anti-christ, whom they have so willingly believed. The same is the case when ambition is in question. The person to be won may be high in social position. He may hold a high office; he may be a military officer, or a professor, or a magistrate, or a physician. There is for a Catholic girl, or her relatives, a strong temptation in this country to accept the offer of such an alliance at any price, be it even consent to the education of the children as Protestants.

Yes, these foolish and conscienceless Catholics are of the opinion that it is a sign of great respectability to be a Protestant, and to possess only a few shreds of Christianity! I once knew a Catholic girl who married a Protestant. He agreed that the daughters should be educated in a convent as Catholics; but the silly creature would not consent to it, because, forsooth, she thought Protestant daughters would bestow upon their Catholic mother the glitter of greater social distinction. She is dead, and she may have received in eternity another, but, at the same, a terrible enlightenment as to the value of the distinction which she sought. So it is with all who, in the face of the warnings of their pastors, consent to the Protestant education of their children. They have none but earthly reasons, and these have more weight with them than God and His Holy Church. But herein consists the essence of all mortal sins: To love or to fear a creature, or earth's goods, more than the Creator of heaven and earth, is to sell the Saviour for thirty pieces of silver.

It is not long since that a priest, who is pastor of a Catholic congregation in a rich Protestant city, told me the following: A girl, who was employed in the shop of a millionaire, had, by her behaviour, won his entire regard. He had the sense to see that he did not need to acquire more money by his business than he had already, but that he wanted a daughter-in-law by whom the peace and welfare of his family would be secured. He thought that this girl had all the requisite qualities. After consulting with his two sons, he offered her the hand of the elder. She declined, saying that she had a high regard for his son, but that she could not marry him, simply because she was a Catholic. Some time afterward the younger son offered her his hand, and told her she could live afterwards according to her religion. But the girl gave the same reply, that she could not comply with his wishes because her Catholic conscience forbade her to do so. And so she preferred to remain what she was, a poor shop girl, than become the wife of a millionaire in mixed marriage. How high and noble stands this poor servant girl before God and the world in comparison with those rich persons, yes, even many princesses, who, for the sake of a worldly advantage, entered matrimony by bartering their souls and the souls of their children!

DISHONEST EXCUSES.

As there is with every willful mortal sin, (*e. g.*, perjury,) a false excuse in order to blindfold the conscience and to quiet scruples, so it is the case in matrimony with respect to the Protestant education of the children. These excuses are so evidently false that only a glimmering of reason is sufficient to see that there is no truth whatsoever in them. I will indicate some that are generally made use of.

a) "*We all have but one God.*"

That there is one God, Catholics, Protestants, Jews

and Turks believe ; but in this there is no allusion made to the essence of God. This man can only know by revelation. The Saviour says : "This is eternal life, That they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." "No one can come to the Father but through Me." Jesus Christ, our Lord, has founded a Church by which man will have share in Him. And He has declared expressly : "Whosoever does not hear the Church, let him be to you as a heathen." We Catholics belong to this Church ; in this Church we have part in Jesus Christ, our Lord, in His perfect truth, and in all His Sacraments ; and by Him only can we come to God. Whosoever does not belong to this Church cannot even have a true knowledge of the true God. His god, as he conceives him, is no more than an imagination, and not the real and true God as He has revealed Himself and as He is known in the Catholic Church. The phrase, "We all have but one God," is only a snare and a delusion for dishonest hearts of men who do not care for the pure truth.

b) *"Protestants, too, will go to heaven, because amongst them are as many good people as amongst the Catholics."*

Now pay attention to what I say : The Protestant, who is born in a Protestant family, and is without his fault in error, and tries to live as a Christian, has hard work to attain the destination of man—that is, heaven,—because he is in want of the means of salvation, especially Confession and Holy Communion ; but he will not be condemned for his errors, because he was brought up in them. But quite otherwise is it with those who have been born and educated as Catholics, and who have made a shipwreck of their faith ; of these the Saviour says : "Whosoever believeth not shall be condemned." Many a person thinks that he does not compromise his Catholic faith if he permits that his children be brought up Protestants. But this is entirely wrong. He compromises his faith through his children, because he himself thereby shows that he has no longer faith in the

Catholic Church. If you believe that the Catholic Church is the only true Church of Christ, and yet you agree to the Protestant education of your children, you commit an irreparable injury towards your children, and act as a Judas towards the Church of Christ. That there are amongst Protestants pious and just people I believe myself ; but this is the case because many Protestants are better than their religion ; if they would become Catholics they would be still more perfect Christians. It is true that many Catholics lead a bad life, but of them we say they are worse than their religion, or in their hearts they fell already away from their faith ; and to these you, my reader, belong—if you intend to have your children brought up as Protestants.

c) A person said once to me : *“In the Protestant church everything is more simple than in the Catholic services ; for that reason I like it better.”*

Yes, indeed, everything is more simple in the Protestant meeting-houses. The plain walls are more simple, the black robe of the preacher is more simple, many a sermon consists only of phrases (like a watery soup without bread). It is very simple not to go to confession, their communion service consists of simple bread as the baker has baked it ; only the wine sometimes is not simple, because the wine-merchant has mixed and adulterated it. It is very simple to die without the Last Sacraments, and it is simple to be buried without a Requiem Mass. To have no religion would be more simple yet than to have a few scraps of teaching which are torn from the body of the Catholic truth. Innumerable Protestants have in all simplicity made another kind of progress : they do not go to church the whole year round, and do not believe in anything at all. What you call simple is nothing but emptiness, poverty, frigidity. You might compare the Protestant meeting-house with a room without table, chair and stove, with fair walls and broken windows ; of course, that is all very simple.

d) *"It has gone too far already."*

Many a person may say: "My parents have consented, I have given my word, all my relatives and friends know it, the contracts are signed; what would the people say if I would back out now?" You may give us a hundred more reasons, but one thing is certain, a Christian has sooner to sacrifice his life than to commit a mortal sin; you commit a mortal sin with due reflection and on purpose if you agree to a marriage in which your children are separated from the Catholic Church, and are brought up in dreary Protestantism. Here the words of Christ are important: "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" And again: "If thy right eye scandalize thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is expedient that one of thy members should perish, rather than that thy whole body should go into hell." The eye which you should pluck out is the bride or the groom. You should do so even if it should be as painful to you as if you would pluck out your physical eye. If you do not do it, you prefer a creature who may, perhaps, rot in the grave in a few years, to the great and almighty God who created you, and to your Saviour, who has given His life and Blood for your immortal soul, and you cast yourself into eternal damnation, from which you cannot be redeemed.

What is indispensable, and, at the same time, the least that you can do, is to impress upon the Protestant party that if he will not agree to the Catholic education of the children, you will decline the marriage. If he answers that you have agreed already that the children should be educated Protestants, tell him that to keep this promise would be sinful for you as was the command of Herod to behead St. John the Baptist, because he had promised it. If the other party says he thinks as much of his religion as you do of yours, and you cannot expect of him that which you would not consent to yourself, you may answer that it is not at all the same case. The Protestant may yield rather than the Catholic, because the children

participate in the Catholic Church all benefits which can be found amongst believing Protestants,—I mean Baptism, the faith and the triune in God, in fact, everything that is taught by the Apostolic creed; but the Catholics have got many things which have been set aside by the so-called reformers, and which, after all, is very important for the salvation of the soul. Therefore a Protestant is respected even if he agrees that the children be brought up as Catholics, but he cannot respect the Catholic who shows himself unfaithful towards the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. If the Protestant party insists upon the Protestant education of the children, you have no choice but to withdraw from the engagement, if you do not want to forsake your faith. You dare not even agree to the proposal often made by Protestants, that the boys shall follow the religion of their father, the girls that of the mother. It would be like a woman with twins who nourishes the one and lets the other starve. She is the murderess of the soul of the child whose faith perishes. In all matters which refer immediately to Catholic faith you cannot, without sin, make compromises.

LIFE AND DEATH IN MIXED MARRIAGE.

THE mixed marriage ceremony must be dismal to the Catholic party. The priest cannot marry you if you have agreed to the Protestant education of the children; you have to go to a Protestant church, where, perhaps, you have not been in your whole life-time; you have to stand before a Protestant preacher to be treated by him as if you belonged to his flock, the Protestants. That is the first surrender of conscience. Then comes the distraction and bustle of the wedding. If a swimmer throws himself from the shore into the sea, he will sink down first as far as possible, and then come back to the surface of the water. So you, after your wedding, will be immersed in the joys of this world; but some time later your

poor soul will rise again, and come, as it were, to itself. The first Sunday, there will be a dis-union. You want to go to your church, whither you were accustomed to go. Your husband will refuse to go with you, and he will look upon your going to church with dislike. Later he will ridicule or abuse your faith. Formerly you were accustomed to keep the commandments of the Church, and not eat meat on Fridays. Now you can do so no longer; your husband will want meat on Friday, and after a while you will eat meat on the same day, like a Protestant; that is the second stain on your conscience. Easter comes, and since your first Holy Communion you have never omitted to receive the Sacraments at Easter. This has now become a troublesome and difficult matter for you. If you go to confession, and conceal the mortal sin you committed in agreeing to the Protestant education of your children, you deceive your confessor, the absolution is void, and you, burdened with all your sins, receive unworthily the Holy Communion. If you tell your confessor openly the truth, the very first question will be whether you repent from the bottom of your heart of the faithlessness of which you are guilty on account of that sinful agreement. If you cannot say before Almighty God that you repent of this sin, not merely out of a feeling of regret, but out of love to God, that you are willing to do and suffer everything rather than again offend God so grievously, and if you really do not do everything in your power to repair the damage done, no priest can give you a valid absolution. As long as you have no such repentance, and, moreover, would, even now, if that opportunity were to present itself, still contract such a marriage, you could not receive the Blessed Sacrament, without committing a mortal sin. Thus would your life be embittered from the altar to the grave: by your living without the Sacraments.

If children are born to you, you will comprehend what you have done by your cursed agreement. You are descended from Catholic parents; your ancestors

may have been Catholics for a thousand years ; they resisted the onslaught of the reformation, perhaps they underwent persecution because they would not abandon the Catholic Church. Now you commit the crime of breaking the long chain of your Catholic ancestors, and of delivering your children over to a false religion. The preacher comes and performs the rite of Baptism, which is, perhaps, not valid, over your child, inscribes the name of your child in the Protestant record, and now it is lost, lost by your own fault to the Catholic Church. To as many children as you will give birth, to so many souls will you bring dishonor.

The children grow up ; you should pray with them ; they should go to school and church. There the sting of your sins is felt again in your conscience. If you say the "Our Father" with them, you will have to omit to say the "Hail Mary." In school, your children are taught a catechism which blasphemes the Catholic faith. They go to one church, you go to another. Thus, you and your children realize that you are separated in the most important matter of religion, and that you belong to each other no more. This separation will be sharply drawn still more on the day of their so-called confirmation. Very often, yes, I may say, as a general thing, the children, by the instructions received, are so filled with hatred and scorn for Catholicity, that they will never get rid of that prejudice. Your children will lose their respect and love towards you because you are a Catholic ; consequently, they will be less obedient to you. Many a time will you hear them tell what they have heard in school or from their preacher, and you may hear remarks made against the Catholic religion which will hurt you more than if a wasp had stung you, or if whilst eating you had bit into a piece of glass. All this through your own fault. But supposing that one or the other of your children in later years recognizes that the Catholic Church is something deserving of veneration and regard,—how contemptible must you appear to them because you have

shown yourself so faithless towards that noble Church! And how are you going to keep up the practice of your religion yourself? You have excommunicated yourself; you belong to a Catholic faith no longer. You cannot find any consolation in prayer. You have trespassed God's commandments, and you cannot pray any longer: "Thy will be done;" you may only pray for your true conversion. Your Catholic relatives and friends can have no real respect for you, because you have made your children forsake your Church out of low and worldly motives: your appearance awakens in them the remembrance of a sinful deed.

What I have said hitherto occurs in a mixed marriage where the Catholic party has not lost the faith;—but very seldom the Catholic party in a family where all the rest are Protestants, and, perhaps, in a Protestant village or city, will keep his faith. Life amongst Protestants makes a person gradually indifferent to Catholic piety, finally even malicious against the Catholic Church. Every remembrance of the defection is disagreeable; qualms of conscience arise: for that reason the thought is avoided. And now the unfortunate is in perfect apostacy from the Catholic Church, in which, by the great grace of God he was born and baptized.

For the Protestant consort it is in itself no sin to be a Protestant; but for the Catholic the falling into Protestantism—the forsaking of faith, is a sin deserving damnation. The matter of greatest moment to every man is how to die. It is the pronouncement of God, delivered by the oldest fathers of the Church: "As I find you, I will judge you." How will God judge the Catholic who consented to the Protestant education of his children?

1. The Catholic consort in a mixed marriage may not have advanced any farther in the abandonment of his faith, but may have become uneasy in conscience after the honeymoon is over. Such a person may have felt deep anguish when children were born, and were really separated in religion from father or

mother. Such a person will ask for a priest on his death-bed only out of terror of the judgment of God. But the question is whether they will get one. The Protestant members of the family do not care about the last Sacraments, perhaps they are even positively opposed to them. Under these circumstances, they have many a reason not to permit the visit of a Catholic priest, and they will never exhort father or mother to be prepared. Protestants very often think their chief care in sickness to be to console the sick person, and tell him that he will be well again in a short while. So it happens that many a Catholic dies without having received the help and consolation of the last Sacraments, perhaps as a retribution for having betrayed his own children, and for having consented to their Protestant education.

2. We will consider the case in which the Catholic party has not felt much anxiety about the affair of education. He got along well; the Protestants have shown him much friendship and favor, because no one is better liked by them than a Catholic who permits his children to be educated as Protestants. The children are able to employ nice phrases and make a good appearance. The conscience of such persons is often like a volcano. Such a mountain may be quiet for many years; perhaps once in a while a light smoke arises from it. But all at once it thunders within it; the fiery flames break forth, rocks and stones are thrown out of it. So the conscience of man may be quiet for years, but on the death-bed it will break forth like a volcano, and the terrible flames of despair rage in the soul, a fearful prelude of hell. How awful must be for such a man the thought: "If the Catholic faith is the only true and saving one, then I have wronged my children out of their salvation; and how will it be for me before the judgment seat of Christ, who is chief and founder of the Catholic faith?"

3. Very often it happens, especially if the married couple live in a Protestant place, that they abandon their religion entirely, so that they take on Sunday a Protestant prayer-book and go to a Protestant church.

On Easter the Catholic party does not go to communion in a Protestant church, but neither does he go to the Catholic church to receive the Blessed Sacrament. They are living as if in a state of religious listlessness. Yes, there are persons that in time hate the Church, their mother, and mock it more than Protestants. Such persons often die quite unconcerned. But to die so after a life in mortal sin is the most terrible thing that can happen to man; it means to die in obduracy, and go into eternal damnation, like a man who sleeps near a great fire, and suddenly falls into it. Should such an unfortunate Catholic with Protestant children even at that moment ask the help of a priest, and receive the extraordinary grace of confessing with repentance, even then the matter is still doubtful yet. The children remain Protestants, and this cannot be remedied. That misfortune remains and exists from generation to generation, perhaps to the day of judgment. How will the saints and your Catholic ancestors regard you? This misfortune will gnaw your soul like a cancer, and even if it should be saved, its torments in Purgatory will be terrible, perhaps up to the day of judgment! How sad are your funeral rites! The coffin in which your corpse lies appears to good Catholics as the coffin of a suicide. The suicide has committed his sin because of the misery that appeared intolerable to him, and often through loss of mind; you have committed this sin from lust, lust of the flesh, lust of the eye in pride of life, and against conscience. Does your soul deserve more mercy than the soul of the unfortunate suicide? Your consort and your children may accompany your corpse sobbing; they may shed tears, but they will not pray for you, because they have been taught that false and loveless doctrine that the soul of man will, after death, either immediately go to heaven or to hell,—for that reason they cannot pray for you. For that reason, no Mass will be said for your poor soul; and if a monument be placed over your grave, it would profit you less than one Our Father said by a Catholic in the state of grace.

This your children will never do, even if they visit your grave and shed tears.

II.

MIXED MARRIAGE WITH CATHOLIC EDUCATION OF THE CHILDREN.

MANY Catholics are so conscientious that they will only enter a mixed marriage on condition of the Catholic education of their children. But what is a promise and a signature in our days? I know of more than one man who agreed to this condition before the union, who afterwards acted like a scoundrel: he broke that sacred promise which he made to his Catholic consort, and through which he induced his Catholic consort to marry him. Whilst the poor woman was lying weak and helpless, he took her children to the Protestant preacher. The poor woman afterwards complained, but all in vain. Many a Protestant is so bigoted that he does not scruple at a lie, or at perjury, if he can tear a soul away from the Catholic Church.

It is not my business to instruct Protestants who want to remain so, in the affairs of their soul. But there are certain truths which are so evident that they cannot be denied either by Protestants or by Catholics. To them belongs: Are you a faithful Protestant? Then you act sinfully and unreasonably if you contract a mixed marriage. If you agree that your children should become Catholics, you act against your conscience—if you think that the Protestant faith is the only true one, yet you permit that your children be not educated in it; or you insist that

your children should become Protestants—and then you are guilty of a mortal sin, because it is your fault that the Catholic party commits a mortal sin against his faith and his conscience, and therefore lives and dies in the state of mortal sin before God. The Protestant can only enter marriage with a good conscience with a Catholic person when he is convinced of Catholic truth and becomes a Catholic. Of course then it is no longer a mixed marriage. Now it is very often the case that a so-called Protestant is not a Christian, that he does not believe even in the divinity of Christ; and that all religions are as indifferent to him as they are to the beast. For such a one I have no advice, because he will only do what he likes or by which he can profit. Protestants who do not believe in anything, or who do not care about religion, or do not like their preacher, may consent that their children be educated Catholics in every case, though you have a consort who is separated from you in the most important affair of the soul. Married people should be one in everything, and especially in matters of faith. The nuptials commence with a separation, you have to go alone to confession and communion; the Protestant party will not and can not go with you. This is the prelude to a divided matrimony. You cannot even say the “Our Father” together; the Protestant party does not want to know anything about the “Angelical Salutation,” while the Catholic party is accustomed from childhood to unite the one with the other. You do not go with your consort to the same church; you cannot go with him to the Lord’s Supper; the Holy Communion divides you sharply instead of uniting you. The relatives of your Protestant consort look at you with suspicion, because Protestants are generally intolerant towards Catholics, especially if you have insisted upon the Catholic education of the children. Even the Catholic pictures on your walls, especially that of the Blessed Virgin, are an occasion to them of scandal and ridicule.

In the married state there is often unhappiness, and

even great unhappiness; but the unhappiness in mixed marriages is generally very bitter; each party remembers that the other belongs to a strange religion. The Protestant easily gets the thought he might be divorced and marry another person; yes, for him it is not even necessary that he is living in unhappiness to be tempted in that way; for him it is only necessary that he meets with a person whom he likes better, and he will easily find a reason for a divorce, so as to marry the other one. Then it is worse for the Catholic party than if the Protestant had died. He is not free and not married, and yet not widowed; therefore he can not marry again, without falling from the Catholic faith as long as the separated party is alive.

The education of the children is often a failure when one of the parents is a Protestant. For the Protestant it is not very agreeable, as his children grow up, to hear them say other prayers, and see them go to another church than the one he is accustomed to go to. The more faith the Protestant party has, the more painful it is for him to see his grown up children becoming pious Catholics, and if you say the rosary with your children, your consort feels the estrangement in his family more and more. The Protestant father or the Protestant mother is looked upon by their own children as a heretic; this, therefore interferes with the fulfillment of the fourth commandment, and with the respect children should have towards their parents. Every religious exhortation from the Protestant party is received by the children with mistrust, and for that reason it is very often not given. On the part of the female it might be replied: "If I marry a Catholic who does not care anything about his religion, as there are so many in our days, I may be worse off than if I marry a good Protestant." That is not always the case: you will hardly convert your Protestant husband to your religion. But it is possible and has often happened that a sensible and good woman has brought her Catholic husband back by her word and example, so that he goes again with her to church and to the Holy Sacraments,

even if he has not done so for years. A man will seldom resist his pious wife ; at the worst, when he is on his death-bed he will be converted, and be reconciled with his God ; whilst a Protestant husband will die as Protestants generally die. She cannot even get a Mass said for the repose of his soul. Sometimes it may happen that the Catholic party dies first, but what will then become of the poor children ? Very often it will happen that they will be sent to a Protestant school, and made Protestants. Even if the Protestant party is as honest as possible, and wishes, after the death of the Catholic consort, to keep his promise to have the children educated Catholics, who will take care of the education of those children at home in the Catholic faith ? The Protestant party cannot, even with the best will. If the latter marries again and marries a Protestant, what then will become of the Catholic children ? Therefore neither a Catholic father nor mother who has been living in mixed marriage can die easy at the thought of these dangers. The dying Catholic has to fear that his children will be brought up as Protestants, or that they will not be sound in the Catholic faith. So there is in a mixed marriage, even with the Catholic education of children, many calamities to be feared. Therefore the Catholic Church dislikes any sort of mixed marriages. The marriages in which the children are educated Protestants are entirely forbidden, and a Catholic priest can never bless such marriages. In this case there is no dispensation, even for a king or emperor who would ask the Pope for one. Even if the children are educated Catholics, the Church dislikes the marriage. Therefore Pope Benedict XIV. has ordered that they shall not be contracted before the altar, but in the sacristy, as a sign that they are not entered into with the favor of the Church. From all this a Catholic is able to see that he ought never to make the acquaintance of a Protestant in order to marry her. If father or mother advise or even command such a marriage, disobedience is then a duty ; you must obey God and His Church rather than man.

The Saviour Himself says distinctly: "Whosoever loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." Such parents will have to answer before God why they have required such a marriage of you.

If you should have already made the acquaintance of a Protestant, declare to him firmly that your faith and your conscience command you to give up that acquaintance; you can only resolve to enter an entirely Catholic marriage because only in it is peace and unity in the most important affairs of your heart. You would have to do the same if, without acquaintance, a Protestant would offer to marry you; be firm in that resolution. You owe to God innumerable thanks that you have been born and raised in the Catholic Church, in this refuge for poor sinners, and that you have your share in the blessed Sacraments. Would you be so ungrateful towards God as to tear away your future children from the Catholic Church, the source of salvation, and let their souls wither in the dry soil of Protestantism? May God prevent you from such a murder of souls!

III.

FOR CATHOLICS WHO ARE ALREADY LIVING IN MIXED MARRIAGE.



FOR those this pamphlet may act as vitriol on a healing wound. It may be that their consciences are not yet dead. Shall those people despair, or what shall they do? Have they lost everything, and are they lost themselves? To these questions I will give a two-fold answer.

a) For those who have agreed to the Protestant education of their children, although they themselves

belong to the Catholic Church: If they do not repent, but are quite content with their surrender, nay, would make it again if they were to marry again, they will die and go where all those go who fall from the Catholic faith. They will go into the other world without satisfaction for the crime they have committed. Such men are called apostates. As there is nevertheless, even for the greatest sinner, forgiveness in the Sacrament of Penance, if he approaches the Saviour with repentance, so also the Catholic consort can find forgiveness if he be converted, and accuse himself with bitter contrition that he has cut off the immortal souls of his children from the source of salvation—from the Catholic Church—and delivered them to the adversary, to Protestantism. This contrition must be very strong, yes, so strong that you would be willing to do and to suffer anything rather than consent again to such a crime. And in this state of repentance you must remain to the end of your days. Therefore you have to do everything in your power to repair the damage done to your children by consenting to their Protestant education. Before all, you must ask your Protestant consort most urgently to permit the Catholic education of the children. This request you must renew again and again, even if he has refused you, and refused in anger. Tell him you cannot find rest and can enjoy life no more if your children will not become Catholics; be not content until he has agreed to your petition. Again, it is necessary that you show a true respect for the Catholic religion, and that you try to produce this effect in the soul of your consort. You must try to be an honor to the Catholic Church, so that your consort may wish your children would imitate you. Furthermore, you must pray and induce others to pray that God, with whom everything is possible, may make the heart of your husband to incline to your wishes. But how is it with the children? If they have been baptized by a minister who believes in Christ, the baptism is valid, and your children are made by it members of the Catholic Church, because there is

only one Baptism and one Church. The children are only separated from the Catholic Church if they, at the so-called confirmation, accept the false doctrine and communion from a Protestant minister, who is not ordained, and therefore has no spiritual power. You must therefore try to keep your children Catholics by instructing them in the truths of our religion, and by making them say the Hail Mary and other Catholic prayers. If they come from school, and bring from there the usual calumnies against the Catholic Church, show them that these things are told by the Protestant teachers out of hatred or ignorance. Give to your children Catholic books of piety and doctrine. Make them keep company with good Catholics, and pray often for them that their hearts may be inclined to the only true faith. There is great power in an urgent prayer. I know a woman who married a Protestant, and agreed to the Protestant education of the children. Afterwards this woman, by the great grace of God, received a lively faith; of course her conscience became very uneasy because all the children went to Protestant schools, and in this way became Protestants. She commenced to pray, and prayed fervently that her children might be enlightened with the same faith she enjoyed herself. And her prayers were crowned with success, by God's blessing: the children, moved by the love of the Catholic faith, went to their father and asked permission to become Catholics; the father replied to their request: "If you yourselves wish it, I have no objection." The children became very good and pious Catholics, and the eldest girl went to a convent; and after several years the father himself, who was a learned man, became a Catholic. So the merciful God not only forgave the sin of the mother, but even removed the consequences of her sin. But the matter is seldom settled in so happy a manner. There is often an opportunity by which the children may be gained for the Catholic Church, if the Protestant party die. Then the greatest hindrance to your children becoming Catholics is removed. Should your

Protestant relatives try to hinder you, you might, perhaps, leave the place you are living in, and move to a village or city which is entirely Catholic, and where there are Catholic schools and churches. People might say that you, having agreed before marriage to the Protestant education of the children, it would be only just if you would keep your promise even after the death of your husband. But then you may easily answer if a man has promised anything, which, without doubt, is a sin, he ought not keep that promise, because no promise can dispense from obedience towards the express will of God. It is for a Catholic a sin, yes, a crime against the Church of Christ and the souls of her children, to consent to see them educated as Protestants. Her promise was not right before God; and if she fulfills it she remains in the state of sin, until, repenting, she tries everything in her power to save the children from Protestantism.

Finally, every man who has sinned by entering a mixed marriage must try to expiate this sin by earnest endeavors to warn others who are in the same temptation and occasion. Furthermore, he ought at every apt opportunity show his regret that he has delivered his children to Protestantism. By this deed, in fact, he became a public sinner in the eyes of the Catholic Church, and ought to repair the scandal he has given to good Catholics as much as he can. You might be, however, in a condition where your eyes have been opened, but with the best will you cannot repair anything; your children may be grown up already, perhaps married to Protestants, or you yourself are on your death-bed. Then you should not despair, but invoke constantly the almighty and merciful God, your crucified Redeemer, and the Blessed Virgin Mary, that your sin and the damage done by it may be cancelled. It is a grace from God, and a sign that He is inclined to forgive if you remain repenting to the end. But it would be a most dreadful condition to die without repentance of the crime which has been committed against the souls of your children.

b) Catholics who live in mixed marriage, where Catholic education was agreed upon, can by no means be easy about the religion of their children. Above all they have to take the greatest care that the faith of their children be not weakened by the Protestant party until they arrive at a state in which, though they are not Protestants, still they are not Catholics from their hearts. The Catholic father or mother must plant the faith in the hearts of children in such a way that it cannot be injured or grow weak. Therefore the Catholic party in a mixed marriage ought to prevent his children from associating with Protestant children and relatives as much as possible. Where that cannot be hindered entirely, or where your children have to go to a Protestant school, you ought to accustom them always to tell you if anything was said against the Catholic religion. In this way you may, in due time, dispel dangerous doubt and mistrust in the souls of your children. You must never allow your children to read Protestant books or papers which are in the possession of you Protestant consort. In a mixed marriage the Catholic party must do everything alone concerning the religious education of the children. For that reason you ought only to have good Catholic servants. If some of your children are grown up, and if your circumstances allow it, let them be educated in a convent, or in a Catholic institution, where there are only Catholic teachers. On the other hand, never consent that any one of your children be given to Protestants,—even if they are your relatives,—for the sake of education, or for the sake of business, or for any other reason. Finally, provide even for the danger of your death. Your children might be easily led to Protestantism, even against their will; therefore, show them in due time what a great grace the true faith is, and that we ought to be willing to suffer anything in order not to lose it. Read to them sometimes the lives of the martyrs, and such like books, by which they may see what men, even whole people,—for instance the Irish,—have suffered for their faith, that

they may see that they ought rather give up their lives and everything they possessed, than their faith. Then tell them that they might fall into temptation, give up their faith; and instruct them then how they should imitate the examples of the martyrs.

Try to buy books for them in which the truths and beauty of the Catholic Church are put clearly before them. If you come to die, then make your children promise before God that they, all their life-time, will remain true and faithful children of the Catholic Church, and that they will never commit that sin which you have committed: of entering into mixed marriage.

Now that I have written this and you have read it, you cannot excuse yourself any longer with the pretext of ignorance: if you now run against the two-edged knife of mixed marriage, you inflict suicide upon your soul.

Are you in temptation? Do whatever a Christian should do if he undertake an important business, — pray often and fervently, that God may enlighten you, that He may lead you and give you strength to do His holy will. If you really and honestly pray so every day, I know for certain what will happen: — You will pluck out that scandalizing eye and never enter that forbidding cave of a mixed marriage.