

through wickedness of mind, or much more through ignorance and negligence, should not think of seeking for their children the benefit of religious instruction, a great number of young people would remain deprived of the most salutary precepts, with extreme damage not only to these innocent souls, but to civil society itself. And matters being in such extremes, would it not be a duty of whosoever presides over the school to remedy the malice or negligence of others? Hoping for advantages less marked undoubtedly, it was lately thought to render elementary instruction compulsory by law, constraining, even with fines, the parents to send their children to school; and now how could anyone have at heart to withdraw religious instruction from young Catholics, which is indubitably the soundest guarantee of a wise and virtuous direction given to life? Is it not a cruelty to pretend that these children should grow up without ideas and sentiments of religion, until having reached fervid adolescence they find themselves face to face with flattering and violent passions, disarmed, destitute of every curb, with the certainty of being dragged into the slippery paths of crime? It is a torture for our paternal heart to behold the lamentable consequences of this inconsiderate deliberation; and our torture is embittered, since to-day the incitements to every sort of vice are stronger and more numerous. You, Lord Cardinal, who in your high office of our Vicar follow closely the development of the war which is waged against God and the Church in our Rome, know well, without our speaking of it at length, what and how many are the perils of perversion which youth encounters: doctrines which are pernicious and subversive of all constituted order, audacious and violent propositions to the prejudice and discredit of all legitimate authority; finally, immorality, which, without hindrance, proceeds openly in a thousand ways to contaminate the eyes and corrupt the heart.

"When these and similar assaults are made against faith and morals, each can judge for himself how opportunely the moment has been selected to drive away religious education from public schools. Perchance it is desired with these disposition, instead of that Roman people, which was celebrated for its faith throughout the world from Apostolic times, and up to the present day was admired for the vigor and the religious culture of its morals, to form a people without religion and dissolute, and to lead it thus to the condition of barbarism and savagery? And in the midst of this people, perverted with remarkable disloyalty, how could the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the master of all the faithful, see his supreme authority revered, hold with honour his august See, and expect the charges of his Pontifical Ministry respected and tranquil? Behold, Lord Cardinal, the condition, which in part has already been made to us, and which is prepared for us in the future, if the merciful God will not place a limit to this continuance of attempts, the one more to be reprobated than the other.

"But as long as Providence by its adorable judgments allows this trial to last, if it be not in our power to change the condition of things, it is nevertheless our duty to use every effort to mitigate it, in order that its evil effects may be rendered less sensible. Hence it is needful that not only the parish priests should redouble their diligence and zeal in the teaching of the Catechism, but that they should supply by new and efficacious means the void which is caused by the fault of others. We do not doubt but that the clergy of Rome will not be at all this time behind in the sacred duties of their sacerdotal ministry, and that they may employ themselves with the most affectionate care in preserving the Roman youths from the dangers which their faith and their morality run. We are certain, likewise, that the Catholic associations flourishing in this city with so much advantage to religion, will concur with all the means placed in their hands in the holy undertaking of preventing that this holy city, losing the sacred and august character of religion, and the coveted boast of being the Holy City, should become the victim of error and the theatre of unbelief. And you, Lord Cardinal, with the sagacity and firmness with which you are adorned, may procure that oratories and schools may be increased, where the young may be gathered together and instructed concerning the most holy Catholic religion, in which, by a particular grace of heaven, they have been born. Seek, according as it has already been done with good fruit in some churches, that virtuous and charitable laymen, under the vigilance of one or more priests, may lend their labour in the teaching of the Catechism to the children, and procure that the parents be exhorted by the respective parish priests to send their children, and that they may be reminded likewise of the duty—which is incumbent on all—requiring religious instruction in the schools of their children. It will be useful, likewise, to establish catechetical instructions for adults in the places which are believed to be most suitable, in order to keep their salutary teachings alive in the minds which have learned them in their childhood. Never fail to enkindle the piety and to direct still better the pledge of the priests and of the laity, placing before their eyes the importance of the work, the merits which they will acquire before God, before us, and before the whole of society, and which we will study most laboriously to hold in due consideration.

"Nor does it escape us finally that to succeed well in our intent the need of material means likewise occurs, which do not answer in proportion to the necessities. But, if we, constrained to live on the alms of the faithful, placed themselves in great straits by the present dark and struggling times, cannot bestow as much as our heart could wish, we will not however cease to do all that which will be possible to us, to turn away the evil effect which comes from neglected religious education, first to the child and then to civil society itself.

"For the rest, in all our desires and cares it is necessary to send upward the invocation of the Divine help, without which every hope of a happy result is vain. We turn, meanwhile, to you, Lord Cardinal, recommending you warmly to exhort the Roman people to raise to the Lord our God fervent prayers, that in this holy city the light of the Catholic faith may be maintained entire, which the heretical sects, welcomed with honour, would pretend to obscure or wholly extinguish, and together with the impieties are plotting to overthrow this most firm Rock, against which, as it is written, the gates of hell will not prevail. In the heart of the Romans the devotion towards the Immaculate Mother of the Saviour is ancient; but now, the danger pursuing still more, let them recur both more frequently and with more intense ardour to her who crushed the serpent and conquered

all heresies. In the days which recall the solemn memory of the glorious Apostles Peter and Paul, let them prostrate themselves reverently in their basilicas, and conjure them to intercede to God for the city which they sanctified by their own blood, and which they made the depository of their ashes—a pledge, as it were, of their constant protection. Let them make gentle violence of supplication to the celestial patrons of Rome, who, either with their blood, or with the works of Apostolic ministry, or with holy examples, rendered more firm in the hearts of their fathers the faith which is sought to be torn from the bosoms of their sons; and God will be moved with pity towards us, nor will He let His religion be made a laughing stock to wicked men.

"Meanwhile receive, Lord Cardinal, the Apostolic Benediction, which from the depths of our hearts we impart to you, to the clergy, and to all our dearly beloved people. "LEO XIII, P.P.

"From the Vatican, the 26th of June, 1878."

DISRAELI'S MAIDEN SPEECH.

Now that Lord Beaconsfield has reached the top round of the political ladder, anything relating to his earlier ventures in political life must prove interesting, and, taking this view of the case, an English contemporary reproduces Mr. Benjamin Disraeli's first speech in the House of Commons. It was made in 1837, in reply to an attack of Daniel O'Connell upon Sir F. Burdett for deserting the Liberal cause. Mr. Disraeli said:—"I stand here to-night, sir—(here the noise in the House became so general that the honourable gentleman could not proceed for some time; when the confusion had somewhat subsided, he said): I stand here to-night, sir, not formally, but in some degree virtually, the representative of a considerable number of members of Parliament (bursts of laughter). Now why smile (continued laughter)? Why envy me (here the laughter became general)? Why should I not have a tale to unfold to-night (roars of laughter)? Do you forget that band of one hundred and fifty-eight—those ingenious and inexperienced youths to whose unsophisticated minds the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in those tones of winning pathos—(excessive laughter, and loud cries of "Question")—now, a considerable misconception exists in the minds of many members on this side of the House as to the conduct of her Majesty's government with regard to these elections, and I wish to remove it. I will not twit the noble lord opposite with opinions which are not ascribable to him, or to his more immediate supporters, but which were expressed by the more popular section of his party some few months back (question, question). About that time, sir, when the bell of our cathedral announced the death of the monarch (oh, oh! and much laughter)—we all read then, sir (groans and cries of "Oh!")—we all then read—(laughter and great interruption). I know nothing which to me is more delightful than to show courtesy to a new member, particularly if he happens to appeal to me from the party opposed to myself (hear, hear). At that time we read that it was the death-knell of Toryism, that the doom of that party was sealed, that their funeral obsequies were about to be consummated (laughter). We were told that, with the dissolution of that much vilified Parliament, which the right honourable baronet had called together, the hopes and prospects of the Tories would be thrown forever to the winds (laughter), and that affairs were again brought exactly to what they were at the period when the hurried Mr. Hudson rushed into the chambers of the Vatican (immense laughter). I do not impute these sanguine hopes to the noble lord himself particularly, because I remember that, shortly afterwards, the noble lord, as if to check the new and sanguine expectations of his followers, came forward with a manifesto informing them that the Tories could not expire in a moment, but the Ministry in a reform Parliament might depend upon having a working majority of one hundred, which was to be extended upon great occasions to one hundred and twenty-five and one hundred and thirty. Now sir (question, question), this is the question, and I am going to ask the noble lord for our instruction (oh, oh! and great interruption). We only wish to know this simple fact, whether the great occasion on which the working majority was to increase from one hundred to one hundred and twenty-five or one hundred and thirty, is upon the question of an election ballot (cheers and groans), and whether the Grenville Act has not been given forth to the people that it is impossible that an impartial tribunal can be obtained in this House? (oh, oh! question, question). If honourable members think it is fair thus to interrupt me, I will submit (great laughter). I would not act so to any one, that is all I can say (laughter, and cries of "Go on"). But I beg simply to ask (oh! and laughter). Nothing is so easy as to laugh (laughter). I really wish to place before the House what is our position. When we remember all this—when we remember all that, in spite of the support of the honourable gentlemen, the member for Dublin, and his well-disciplined phalanx of patriots, and, in spite of all this, we remember the amatory eclogue (roars of laughter), the old loves and new loves that took place between the noble lord, the Tityrus of the Treasury Bench, and the learned Daphne of Liskard (loud laughter and cries of "Question") which appeared as a fresh instance of the *amoris redintegratio* (excessive laughter), when we remember at the same time that, with emancipated Ireland and enslaved England, on the one hand a triumphant nation, on the other a groaning people, and notwithstanding the noble lord, secure on the pedestal of power, may wield in one hand the keys of St. Peter, and (here the honourable member was interrupted with such loud and incessant bursts of laughter that it was impossible to know whether he really closed his sentence or not). The honourable member concluded in these words:—Now, Mr. Speaker, we see the philosophical prejudices of man (laughter and cheers). I respect cheers even when they come from the lips of political opponents (renewed laughter). I think, sir (hear, hear, and repeated cries of "Question, question")—I am not at all surprised, sir, at the reception which I have received (continued laughter). I have begun several times many things (laughter), and I have succeeded at last (fresh cries of "Question"). Ay, sir, and though I sit down now, the time will come when you will hear me. The honourable member delivered the last sentence in a very loud tone, and resumed his seat amidst cheers from the Opposition, and much laughter from the Ministerial benches.