

Giant's Causeway to Cape Clear, my young and gifted suffragans, on all but one of whom I have laid consecrating hands, the beloved bishop and priests of my native diocese, the faithful, generous, and devoted clergy of Cashel and Emly, ecclesiastics and laymen from near and far have thronged around me to-day, and bidden me length of years in health and happiness. I heartily reciprocate such good wishes, and am justly proud of the recognition thus given of my small services in the cause of Irish progress, Irish prosperity, and Irish independence.

REUNION OF CHRISTENDOM.

(A Series of Lectures delivered in St Joseph's Church, Temuka, by the Very Rev Father LE MENANT DES CHESNAIS, S. M.)

LECTURE III.—WAS JESUS CHRIST AN IMPOSTER, WHO DECEIVED THE WORLD BY THE PROMISE OF AN IMAGINARY FUTURE BLISS? WAS HE AN ENEMY OF SOCIETY—DEIFIED FALSEHOOD? WAS HE A REVOLUTIONIST, A GIGANTIC DEMOCRAT, THE FATHER OF SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM? WAS HE ONLY A MAN OF GENIUS, A WISE MAN, A POPULAR MORALIST, A MAHATMA? WERE THE APOSTLES DECEIVED AND FASCINATED BY HIM? DID THEY DECEIVE US? "I BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD." (ACT. VII, 37.)

In our second lecture we have seen that God spoke through Moses, the Patriarchs and Prophets; therefore Divine revelation is not only possible but a certainty. We have now to study Jesus Christ and Christian Revelation.

The enemies of Christianity may be divided into four principal classes:—(1) Voltaire, John Le Rond d'Alembert, Diderot, and all the Encyclopedists of the last century. For them Jesus Christ was an impostor who deceived the world by the promise of an imaginary future bliss. He is the enemy of progress and civilisation—deified falsehood. He should be crushed like a viper, and no effort should be left untried to undeceive his blinded followers. II.—Strauss, Bauer, Cousin, Vacherot, Renan, and their disciples do not acknowledge the Divinity of Jesus Christ; however they look upon him as a man of genius, who blended together the traditions of the East and of the West with the Jewish doctrine, and from them formed a harmonious system. He was a wise man, a popular moralist, who taught men universal fraternity. He was a thorough revolutionist, a gigantic democrat, the greatest of all reformers, the advocate of the sovereignty of the people, the father of Socialism and Communism. He was a great medical doctor, a celebrated philosopher; His cures were purely natural; this is why He did not wish people to speak about them. Later on these cures were transformed into miracles by His enthusiastic admirers. The first disciples of Jesus Christ wrote nothing; then a few laudatory pages were written, which—by successive additions—became the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The Gospels are to Jesus Christ what romance is to chivalry. Jesus Christ excited the hatred of Pharissical aristocracy and died a victim of the noble cause he had so ably defended. His image grew as time went on; He became the idol of His admirers, who made a God of Him. The rapid spread of Christianity was quite natural, and may be perfectly explained without any supernatural agency. III.—According to Theosophists—who pretend to reconcile all religions, and unite men in a universal brotherhood, Jesus Christ was a Mahatma, who had over nature a power beyond that of ordinary men, and a superior wisdom. IV. Some Rationalists pretend that the religion of Jesus Christ was a sentimental religion, defining nothing, excluding nothing. All dogmatical definitions are a ludicrous transformation of the doctrine of Jesus Christ. 1.—Is Voltaire right? Are we to believe the Encyclopedists of the last century? Is Jesus Christ an impostor, the enemy of civilisation a monster who should be crushed as a viper? Infamem Conterite." The life of Jesus Christ is soon told. He was born, nearly six centuries ago, in a grotto at Bethlehem. Holy angels revealed His nativity to some poor shepherds. Warned by a miraculous star, kings from the East came to adore Him and offer Him presents. At twelve years of age, in the Temple of Jerusalem, he astonished by his wisdom the most famous doctors of the world. When he was xxx years old, he was baptised by St John, the Holy Ghost came down upon him in the shape of a dove, and a voice was heard: "This is my Beloved Son, hear ye Him." He preached for over three years a doctrine unheard of before. He worked most astounding miracles. At his presence the whole universe was in commotion; the deaf had their ears opened, the dumb spoke, lepers were cleansed and the lame walked. The mere contact of His robe was sufficient to heal the sick; by a simple command, He changed water into wine; He fed several thousand people with a few loaves and fishes. He knew the secrets of hearts and what took place at a distance, the future was as clear to Him as the present; the wind and the sea obeyed Him—on Mount Thabor Moses and Elias paid Him homage; the very demons confessed His Divinity and fled away at

His sight, and death gave up His victim; here, it is the daughter of a prince; there, the son of a widow; in another place, Lazarus, who was fast falling into decay—and this He did as a proof of his Divine Mission, and to show that He was the promised Messiah—so that He could say to His enemies: "If you do not believe my words, believe, at least, my works" (John, x, 58). He announced His dolorous passion and death, and His resurrection on the third day. After His resurrection He appeared several times to His apostles and disciples. He promised to send down the Holy Ghost upon them, Who would teach them all truth, and give them the gift of miracles. He foretold the ruin of Jerusalem, etc. All these things have come to pass as He had said them, and, therefore, He is what He affirmed He was: the beloved Son of God, and the Saviour of mankind. This being so, His promise of a future bliss is not vain, but absolutely certain. The most civilised nations of the world profess Christianity. The followers of Jesus Christ are to be found in Europe, in America, in thousands of places of Asia, Africa, Oceania and the scattered islands of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. Millions of churches, oratories, universities, colleges, are living proofs of the sincerity and zeal of those who believe in Him. Orators, historians, poets, artists of every kind have employed their genius to sing his praises. If they have all been deceived, the most enlightened part of mankind, for nearly six centuries, have gone astray: of what, then, can we be certain? Voltaire and the encyclopedists affirm that Jesus Christ is the enemy of progress and civilisation, how is it, then, that the most civilised and polished nations are precisely those which profess Christianity? How is it that all the great monastic schools, the universities of Paris (1250), Prague (1358), Oxford (895), Cambridge (1280), Louvain (1425), Vienna (1365), Basle, etc., were all founded by Christian scientists? The art of printing, clockmaking, aeronautism, electricity, steam navigation, telephony, photography, phonography, type-writing are all Christian inventions. Columbus, Magellan, Americo Vesputci, Hernando Cortez, Jacques Cartier, etc., and other great explorers were also Christians. How then can Voltaire and Deists say that Christianity is the enemy of progress and civilisation? (2) Strauss, Bauer, Cousin, Renan, etc., tell us that Jesus was only a man of genius, a learned philosopher, who harmoniously blended together the religious traditions of the East with those of the West and the Jewish faith. He had a great knowledge of medicine and performed cures, which, though perfectly natural, were transformed afterwards into miracles. Let Strauss, Renan, and their friends tell us where Jesus studied philosophy, theology, botany, materia medica, biology, pathology, etc? Who were the eminent professors who instructed Him? What scientific book did He peruse? Until they answer those questions in a clear, incontrovertible manner we may discard their objections as not proven. "Quod veritas asseritur, gratis negatur." A mere assumption needs no refutation. If the doctrine of Jesus is of a purely human character how is it that for its sublimity precision and completeness it surpasses anything heard of before? That it perfectly harmonises with the most noble aspirations of our nature, and is the only one which gives the key to all the great problems which have perplexed ancient and modern philosophers? How is it that for nearly nine centuries the most eminent scientists and philosophers have been able to add nothing to it except a few commentaries more or less imperfect? That whatever is beautiful, true and good, in any other philosophical or religious system is precisely what they have borrowed or preserved from the doctrine of Jesus Christ, as whatever is beautiful, true and good in the works of ancient philosophers or founders of religions is what they had preserved from the primitive revelation or borrowed from the Jews. Besides even if Jesus had surpassed in skill, learning and experience the most clever doctors, moralists or philosophers it would never satisfactorily explain many of His miracles, His prophecies and His transcendental and heavenly doctrine. Was Jesus a revolutionist, a gigantic democrat, the advocate of the sovereignty of the people, the father of socialism and communism, and the author of the religion of humanity? I boldly affirm He was not. He preached obedience to all legitimate superiors; He declared that every legitimate power was from God. Is this the teaching of democrats, socialists and communists? He commanded His followers to obey legitimate superiors as God, even those who were harsh and cruel. Do democrats, socialists and communists believe this? He told us to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's? What do democrats, communists and socialists want us to render unto Caesar? what respect do they prescribe towards civil rulers? what tribute of love, honour, and obedience do they render to God? what sacrifices are they willing to make to defend the rights of God and of the State? Did not Jesus Christ pay the tribute money to the Roman Emperor? How is this to be reconciled with communism and socialism? But if Jesus was not a socialist or a communist perhaps he was a Theosophist, a Mahatma? Theosophy is a new transformation of Buddhism, the religion most widely spread in the East. Many modern reviews and scientific books have exalted to the sky the wisdom of the Buddhists and declared it was manifest that Jesus had borrowed many of his most beautiful moral pre-