

hampered the spread of the Gospel among those who, in the foreign mission-field, sit in darkness and the shadow of death. The ultimate result may be the acquisition, by our separated brethren, of the true conception of the nature of the Church founded on earth by the Saviour of mankind. It must be a body—'one body and one spirit,' as the Apostle puts it. And it is an organised body—not an accidental assemblage of independent units. It is not, for instance, like a heap of Waitaki shingle, which has nothing more than accidental cohesion, and can be shovelled into a dozen different heaps, and back again into one, without any substantial alteration in the condition of its constituent parts. No; it is an organised body. It is one in body and one in the spirit that pervades it and gives it life. And there is (as a great writer has put it) 'a perpetual communion or interdependence between its parts, by virtue of which the whole becomes, morally, one being, instead of a number of independent atoms.' In other words: it is a living organised body composed of men, continued from age to age till the end of time, God's appointed witness to the world, the teacher and the shepherd of His people.

'GAMBLING' AND LOTTERIES

SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Elsewhere in this issue (pp. 2, 17-18) we make reference to the extraordinarily vehement and bitter attack made last week by members of the Council of the Churches (Wellington) on Catholic art unions. Despite the violence of its denunciations, the Council—like other similar bodies throughout New Zealand—has evidently no fixed principles on the subject which they call by the vague name of 'gambling.' They are marvellously shy about defining terms or laying down, expanding, and establishing principles. And they apparently visit with the same deep damnation halfpenny pitch-and-toss, and a threepenny raffle for a plaque in oils, and the staking of fortunes on one's 'fancy' in horse-flesh or on the trembling chances of rouge-et-noir. Catholics claim the right to be judged in this matter, not by the vague whooping of members of the Council of Churches, but by Catholic theological principles, which are clear, unmistakable, and in full accordance with right reason and Scripture. The following article on the subject was written by Father Masterton, S.J., and appeared in the 'Austral Light' in November, 1901. It deals with the subject much more fully than has been possible for us in the restricted space of an editorial article:—

No one will deny, writes Father Masterton, that gambling is often a sin or the occasion of sin. It is sinful for the father of a family to gamble away the money which ought to be spent on his children's education. It is sinful for the shop assistant to risk in betting or gaming the money which he has filched from his master's till. It is sinful for the bank clerk to stake money which he has embezzled from his bank. Also gambling is to be condemned whenever it leads to the breach of a law which the gambler is bound to observe; whenever it is the occasion of drunkenness, or quarrelling, or blasphemy, or causes him to violate the precept of hearing Mass on Sunday.

Of these and other sins gambling is often the occasion. Indeed, gambling may be attended with so many and such serious evils that the reformer who would successfully cope with them would deserve the gratitude of his country. We are not without reformers, who try to cope with them. They abound in our midst, and their greatest enemies cannot charge them with any lack of zeal. Certainly, they cry aloud and spare not. But so small is the measure of success which rewards their efforts that they would be very well advised to pause and ask themselves whether, after all, there may not be something wrong in their methods. For myself, I cannot help thinking that their want of success is largely due to the headlong intemperance of their zeal. You cannot hector or bully men into becoming virtuous. Especially, if you wish men to give up a practice the propensity to which is deeply rooted in their nature, wisdom, as I should have thought, ought to suggest other weapons than the scalping-knife and the tomahawk. Our reformers are never tired of bearing

witness to the keenness and prevalence of the gambling spirit. If the disease is so prevalent and so inveterate, surely there is all the greater call on the physician to proceed with great caution and prudence: yet our physicians apply probe and knife as ruthlessly as if the use of these instruments were their dear delight. No distinction is drawn between gambling and gambling. The practice is condemned as absolutely and as roundly as if the reformers themselves believed, and as if they wished to convey the impression to their hearers, that all gambling is always and essentially wicked. I hope, then, that it may be useful if, walking soberly in the light which Catholic moralists have shed on my path, I briefly investigate the question whether, independently of the restrictive measures which may have been passed from time to time by our rightful legislators, and of the sins which gambling may occasion, there is anything in the practice which antecedently condemns it, or makes it intrinsically and essentially wrong.

NECESSARY RELAXATION.

I suppose I may take it for granted that at the present day there is no one so puritanic as not to allow that men and women have a right to seek necessary or useful relaxation in a game of cards or chess, or in any other game that is innocent or harmless. The adage, 'all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy,' is equally verified in children of a larger growth. This, I may take for granted. It will be questioned either by none or only by the very few who would not believe Moses or the Prophets if they were to return from the dead.

Moreover, games in which the players have no hope of gain and run no risk of loss are very liable to languish and to fail to attain the end above indicated—the affording of necessary or useful recreation. Occasionally, perhaps, we may meet with two who are so attached or so sentimental as to find recreation in a game of cards played for love, but I think that, as a very general rule, a small money stake must be added to give zest to the game. This seems to me so lawful that if I were not combating the contention that gambling is intrinsically wrong, I should feel a call on me to apologise to my readers for offering proof of a fact which is in itself so evident. The sternest moralist will admit that I may make my friend a present of a sum of money. How then can it be wrong for me to make his getting an equal sum dependent on the condition that he shall be the winner in the game in which he and I are going to engage? If I have such dominion over my money that I may make a free gift of it to my neighbor, surely I may give it to him through the medium of a contract which, in addition to giving me recreation, offers the hope of gain. It is clear, then, that there is nothing immoral in the loser making over his stake to the victor in the game. It is equally clear that there is nothing immoral in the victor's accepting it. Again, if I may accept money from my friend as a free gift, why may I not receive it as the result of a contract which gave him an equal hope of winning and exposed me to an equal risk of losing? The risk that I ran is a marketable quantity, and is the equivalent of the money which I won.

It may occur to my readers to ask does gambling become sinful if the gambler, instead of seeking relaxation or recreation, makes profit his primary end or object? So long as the gambler does not positively exclude every higher end, he may without sin make gain or profit the primary end of his gambling. First, the gambling contract is not in itself unlawful, as I have shown. Secondly, the pursuit of gain is not in itself unlawful. That is to say, neither end nor means is unlawful; and, since it cannot be sinful to pursue a lawful end by lawful means, it is not sinful to intend gambling as a means to the increasing of our wealth.

The more rigorous moralists object to this position. They say the tenth Commandment forbids us to covet our neighbor's goods, and that the gambler who makes profit his primary end necessarily covets his neighbor's goods, and therefore necessarily breaks the tenth Commandment. The answer to this objection seems to me to be very plain and altogether satisfactory. What such a man directly intends is, not his neighbor's loss, but his own gain, and a man may without sin prefer his own gain to the equal gain of his neighbor. Or, if this way of putting the case looks too much of a refinement, I will put the same answer in a somewhat different form. Such a man does not desire his neighbor's goods in a way that is forbidden by the tenth Commandment; he merely wishes that his neighbor's goods should be transferred to himself through the medium of a contract into which both he and his opponent freely enter, a contract in which each has a more or less equal hope of gain, and each runs a more or less equal risk of loss.