

undermine it. Whether we shall close our schools and turn our children adrift; whether we shall resist the payment of rates and taxes, and fill the jails of the country; or what shall be the form of our protest, is matter for debate and discussion and decision; but that we shall resist to the uttermost, let Ministers and politicians understand, once and for all. We have appealed to the sense of justice to our neighbors, and that sense of justice seems wanting. Very well. But Dr. Clifford and his friends have done something to show how how Passive Resistance can be worked. It will be our business to better that resistance tenfold. We shall make a fight on this Education business for liberty of conscience and fair play compared to which the Nonconformist resistance will appear a hollow mockery.'

We are not of the people who are never at peace unless when they are at war. We do not believe in fighting for the sake of fighting. But neither are we believers in the maxim of 'peace at any price.' There are times when it is cowardice to take grave and radical injustice prone and unprotesting and unresisting. And when your back is to the wall, and you must strike in necessary self-defence, it is, as a general principle, good policy to hit with all your might. Circumstances all too frequently arise in which justice can be secured in no other way.

## THE CHURCH AND MORALITY

(By His Grace the Archbishop of Wellington.)

The present subject is the Church and morality—a most important theme, touching our most sacred interests and the direction of our life, nay, our everlasting future—a most opportune theme, because the question of morality was never more discussed than in our day. You hear a great deal in certain quarters about independent morality and religious morality; the former emancipated from all dogma is vaunted to the skies, the latter resting on the idea of God is spurned and despised. This capital error must be exploded. Whatever people may say, it is entirely wrong to distinguish between independent morality and religious morality—no such distinction exists; for there is but one morality; and that one and only morality cannot stand without the Church. Because she is indispensable to morality for three reasons: (1), as the guardian of morality; (2) as the support of conscience; and (3) as the source of sanctity.

### I.

The Church is the guardian of morality, because she maintains the unshakable bases of morality: a code, a legislator, and a sanction. (1) It is needless to show the necessity of a code of morals. Morality being the rule of manners is imposed on all persons, consequently must be universal and immutable. It must be the same for all countries and for all latitudes, the same for the civilized man and the savage, the same for the learned and the ignorant. But the conscience is not the same in all; it is more or less enlightened, more or less upright, more or less timorous, more or less broad. Neither is education identical in all, nor temperament, nor passions, nor interests. And you are aware how different may be the appreciation of the same act according as conscience, or education, or temperament, or passions, or interests vary in each individual. Nevertheless, it is evident that the morality of an act cannot depend merely on contingent, outward circumstances, that would make morality the sport of caprice, nay, bring about its annihilation.

You therefore see the absolute necessity of a code which, by pointing out to everybody where duty lies, serves as the basis of the moral appreciation of our acts. That code is the Decalogue, or the Ten Commandments. God implanted it in man's heart at his creation; but man becoming in course of time either unable or unwilling to discern these commandments inscribed in his conscience and forming what is called the natural law, it was requisite that God should formulate them and solemnly give them to Moses, for transmission to the Hebrew people as His and their law. Jesus Christ took this Decalogue, completed, elevated, perfected it, making it the law of exquisite purity, incomparable beauty, and consummate elevation, which we call Gospel morality.

But this Gospel morality—will men understand it? If they understand it, will they accept it? If they accept it, will they preserve it? Or, like the natural law, will it gradually fade away from the human conscience, vanish and disappear when Jesus has left the earth? No; thanks to the Church that morality was never to perish. The Church gathered it from the lips of her Master, proffered it to mankind, interpreted it to the world which, at the time when the Apostles began to preach, was steeped in fearful corruption; she kept it intact and resplendent. When we recollect in what a fierce deluge of human passions the Gospel teaching appeared, we ask how the Church was able to maintain its doctrine entire and inflexible. Yet she did it, as even her adversaries admit. Always and everywhere the Catholic Church preaches a moral law which mortally wounds pride and lust, those two deities of the corrupt human heart. All the passions of the mind and the flesh encountered her on their way and complained that she was too incompatible. From the barbarian, who asked her to shut her eyes to his plunder and revenge, down to the kings who sought to divorce their wives, she met with rebellion and violent opposition. Even to-day men inquire why she is so holy, why she does not consent to relax certain laws by which she binds human consciences; why she is not more indulgent to the passions and necessities of men. Many would fain come to her who are deterred by her rigor, the yoke of which they dread. But she has received from God the deposit of holiness, and with it the guardianship of conjugal honor and domestic purity. She hears with pain, but inflexibly rejects, such shameful proposals, and maintaining the full perfection of Gospel morality she answers with God: 'My grace is sufficient for thee.'

Thus the Church for the last twenty centuries preserves in its integrity and spreads abroad this perfect Gospel moral code, undimmed like a shining lighthouse radiating into consciences and showing them where lie duty, honor, virtue and the right way.

(2.) The second basis of morality is a Legislator, and the Church keeps the idea of Him in the world, since He is her origin, and she teaches His doctrine, incessantly reminding man of his duty of adoration, praise, and thanksgiving towards His infinite majesty.

Not only is the moral law universal and immutable, but it is absolutely obligatory; no one is free to go against its orders; when it speaks, all must obey. Accordingly, it supposes and demands a Legislator. For, if man commanded himself, he would modify, according to his own whims and fancies, the orders of the law, which would soon go out of existence. Duty must, therefore, be imposed upon us by a will which is the rule of our will, and which has an absolute right over us, in other terms, the Divine Will. Nowadays the necessity of this sovereign Lawgiver is often denied; men loudly vaunt an independent morality based on the nobleness of duty, on self-respect, on human dignity. Assuredly, all these things are excellent in themselves, and may sometimes hinder the fall of certain privileged, noble, elevated finely balanced natures; but all are incapable of heeding their voice and feeling their influence; for most men these barriers are ineffectual. Even for the best of men, they are not always sufficient; for if conscience shows us the beauty of virtue too often it is darkened by the passions which divide our heart. Look into yourselves: have you never known these hours of conflict and anguish when everything in and around you seemed conspiring your ruin; when your soul, like a hapless barque drifting in the storm, was tossed by the violence of your evil instincts and threatened with instant shipwreck? In those moments, had you perceived no light but that of reason to guide you, and no force to help you in the struggle but the prestige of duty and personal dignity, it is greatly to be feared that you would have run on the rocks in the fierce current of pleasure. To remain steadfast and safe in the tempest, we require the thought that God is there in our soul as He was in the Apostle's boat—God the supreme Lawgiver Who intimates to us and shows us His orders in a more vivid light—God our friend Who seems to sleep, as on the lake of Genesareth, so as not to deprive us of the merit of battle and victory, but Who watches over us, gives us strength to struggle, nay, struggles with us—God the Sovereign Judge who awaits us, when we leave the world, to reward or punish us eternally.

(3.) For, the third essential basis of morality is a sanction. Every act implies a consequence for the being that performs it; that is true alike in the moral and the material order. Free beings we are responsible for our actions; and this responsibility requires a sanction, that is, a reward for the good done, and a punishment for the evil committed. This sanction is the imperative demand of justice. But who