

'STAND FAST IN THE FAITH'

(A Weekly Instruction specially written for the N.Z. TABLET by GHIMEL.)

THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS.

A reader wants some information about this axiom, which is so frequently thrown in the face of Catholic moralists. The axiom may be taken in the sense given it by nearly all moralists, Catholic and non-Catholic, and then it means that a good purpose bestows a higher moral value upon means that are in themselves either good or indifferent. If I am moved to give an alms on account of some good motive, I at once lift an action which is in itself good into a higher moral plane. If I go for a walk with a friend for no other reason than to cheer him up in his troubles, I change an action that is indifferent into one that is morally good.

But Catholic, especially Jesuit writers are accused of holding that even *sinful* actions are permissible or morally good, if only they tend to the attainment of some good and holy object. It is, for example, naturally sinful to kill another, but if I kill the Protestant sovereign of a country to make way for a Catholic, I am doing something good—the end makes all the difference.

Such is the charge. Since 1852, Jesuit writers have time and time again offered substantial rewards to anyone who could show that this principle was laid down in any book written by a Jesuit. The rewards were never claimed. A Protestant writer, Zöckler, explains this fact on the ground that the Jesuits did not teach the axiom explicitly, but only in the form of certain equivalents. What an admission! Equally significant is his admission that Pascal's charge (similar to the one above) has never yet been found clearly expressed in the works of any Jesuit, but the fuller knowledge of the Jesuit writers on casuistry (*the probability of it*).

The opponents of the Jesuits are fond of quoting an expression found in the works of a Jesuit, named Busenbaum, who died in 1608: "When the end is lawful, the means are also lawful." This looks conclusive at first sight, but when a Protestant writer, Grünberg, examined the context he found that here it has none of the objectionable meaning imputed to it by controversialists. Apart from the fact that the means are said to be sanctioned, not justified or sanctified, Busenbaum, in using these words, had no intention at all of laying down a new or even a *moral principle*, but he employed them as a universally recognised *logical* rule, or as stating an obvious fact. Busenbaum is arguing that if it is not a sin for a prisoner to attempt to escape, the preparations for it cannot be forbidden as immoral. It would be absurd to tell a prisoner he could run away but must not break a lock.

On March 31, 1903, Dusbach, a member of the German House of Deputies, offered two thousand florins to anyone who could prove that the Jesuits really maintained this odious principle. An ex-Jesuit, P. von Hoensbroech, came to light. A court of arbitration could not be formed, as Protestant professors refused to have anything to do with it, so the eager claimant of the reward went to law. During the examination of the case, he made this very interesting admission: "Criticism has refuted all the evidence adduced from the time of Pascal to the present day in favor of the occurrence of this notorious principle in the works of Jesuit writers. . . . The evidence now brought forward is new."

The new evidence was taken, and the Court of Appeals at Cologne declared on March 30, 1905, that the required evidence had *not* been supplied. It gave these reasons for its verdict: "All the passages quoted by the complainant from the writings of Jesuits refer exclusively to *definite*, individual actions, and the authors answer the question whether, assuming certain definite things to be the case, these actions are permissible. In a particular case the question is discussed whether it is permissible to advise a man to commit a lesser sin, who is fully determined to commit a greater

one, there being no other means of deterring him. We must not lose sight of the fact that the point is always whether it is permissible to advise a man to commit a slight sin, never whether slight sins are permissible, so that the whole question turns upon a very definite action—namely, the giving of scandal. . . . If it be regarded as permissible to give such advice, the supporters of this opinion take pains to show that the action does not become permissible *on account of the end*, but is good by *reason of its object*, and they explain in very various ways that the object of the action or advice is not the perpetration of a sin, but the *diminution* of a greater, or the choice of a lesser sin, and that this is a good object." In the concrete, these Catholic moralists saw no harm in advising a man who was on the point of shooting another, to give him a flogging instead.

The Court stated that while it was possible to challenge this argument, it was impossible to discover in it the obnoxious principle of the end justifying the means.

WEDDING BELLS

COUGHLAN SCANNELL.

A quiet but very pretty wedding took place in the Cave Catholic Church on June 1, when Miss Margaret Agnes Scannell, daughter of Mrs. and the late Michael Scannell, of Ma Waro, was married to Mr. S. Coughlan, son of Mrs. and the late Simon Coughlan, of Kerrytown. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Father Le Petit, who also celebrated a Nuptial Mass. The bride, who was given away by her brother (Dr. F. A. Scannell, of Temuka) was every becomingly attired in a dress of ivory duchesse satin with pearl trimmings, and an overdress of silk shadow lace, caught with orange blossoms, a spray also decorating the bodice. An exceptionally pretty and uncommon bridal veil was worn, this being of Egyptian silk work, with a border of hand-made lace, a gift from her brother (Dr. W. G. Scannell, of the Main Expeditionary Force). It was arranged in Spanish mantilla style, with pearls and orange blossoms. The bridesmaid, Miss K. Scannell, wore a very pretty dress of pale blue crepe de-chine, made in three tier effect, and trimmed with pearls and pale pink tulle. Her hat was of black velvet with pale pink flower. Both bride and bridesmaid carried shower bouquets of white chrysanthemums, maiden hair, and asparagus. The bridegroom was attended by Mr. M. Bourke, of Awatuna, as best man. After the ceremony the party proceeded to the residence of the bride's mother, 'Kiskaem,' Ma Waro, where the wedding breakfast was partaken of. Later in the day Mr and Mrs. Coughlan left for the south, where the honeymoon was spent, the bride wearing a costume of navy serge with white stripe, and a grey velvet hat with large black ostrich plume and a set of squirrel furs. Many handsome presents were received, including one from the householders of the Monavale School, of which the bride was sole teacher, and another from the members of the Albury Church Choir, the bride being one of its members.

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