

ROME'S CURSES AGAINST PROTESTANTS

“THE ANATHEMA”

Church Association Tract 407
(July, 1910)

“By the authority of Almighty God, and of His holy Apostles Peter and Paul, we strictly forbid under the pain of anathema, that anyone shall draw away these present virgins, or holy nuns from divine service to which they have devoted themselves under the banner of chastity or that anyone purloin their goods, or hinder them possessing them in quiet. But if anyone shall dare attempt such a thing, let him be accursed (maledictus) at home, and abroad; accursed in the city and in the field; accursed in waking and sleeping; accursed in eating and drinking; accursed in walking and sitting; accursed in his flesh, in his bones, and from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head let him have no soundness. May the malediction come upon him which the Lord hath laid on the sons of iniquity by Moses in the Law. May his name be blotted out from the book of the living and not written with the just; may he have his portion and lot with Cain the fratricide, with Dathan and Abiram, with Ananias and Sapphira, with Simon the sorcerer and the traitor Judas, and with those who have said to God: Depart from us, for we will not know Thy ways. May he perish in the day of judgment; may perpetual fire devour him with the Devil and his angels, unless he make restitution and come to amendment.”

This horrible malediction is contained in the Roman Pontifical, which is an authority of the same standing in the Church of Rome as the Prayer Book is in the Church of England. It will be noticed that according to this formula “anathema” is threatened first, and then *pronounced* in a series of curses against delinquents. These curses are the “Anathema” proper: in the Pontifical the Anathema is launched against persons who persuade nuns to give up their unnatural mode of life; or who assist them to impart reality to their vow of “holy poverty,” by relieving them of the snares of wealth. But it must not be supposed that they are the only people whom Rome “smites with the sword of Anathema.”

Every Council of the Church of Rome defines her views of the Gospel of Peace in a series of Anathemas against the Christians who dispute the truth of her doctrines. Thus the Council of Trent (1545-1563) which was assembled to condemn the Reformation, issued 128 canons under anathema. Of these the following are excellent samples:—

“If anyone shall say that the good works of a justified person are in such sense the gifts of God that they are not also the good MERITS of that justified person: let him be anathema” (Sess. VI., can. 32).

“If anyone shall say that the Sacraments of the New Law . . . are more or less than seven in number . . . let him be anathema” (Sess. VII., can. 1).

“If anyone shall deny that wonderful and singular conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body of Christ, and the whole substance of the wine into His blood—the outward appearance alone remaining—which conversion the Catholic Church most aptly calls ‘Transubstantiation’: let him be anathema” (Sess. XIII., can. 2).

Similarly the Council of the Vatican, 1870, decreed twenty-two anathemas; the last of them, being added to the definition of the “Infallibility of the Pope,” runs in these words:—

“But, if anyone shall presume, which God forbid, to contradict this Our definition: let him be anathema.”

Thus it is that the Church of Rome officially and authoritatively curses all Christians who reject her teachings; but especially numerous are her maledictions against Protestants.

Lest the reader should think that these anathemas are only the work of past Councils for which modern Rome is in no way responsible it is necessary to state that the basis of the whole Romish system is the idea of the infallibility of the Church, whereby the decrees of her "General Councils" are held to be the voice of God the Holy Ghost Himself. Moreover the Creed of Pope Pius IV., which has to be accepted by every Roman Catholic and to be solemnly subscribed by every ordained person in the Church of Rome, says:—

"I also undoubtedly receive and profess all those other things which have been delivered, defined and decreed by the Sacred Canons and the General Councils, and especially by the sacrosanct Synod of Trent; and at the same time all things contrary thereunto, and all heresies of whatsoever sort, condemned, rejected, and anathematized by the Church, I in the same way do condemn, reject, and anathematize. This true Catholic Faith, out of which no one can be saved, which I now profess of mine own accord, and truthfully hold, I do promise, and vow, and swear, most constantly to retain and confess whole and inviolate until the last breath of my body; and I will take care, as far as in me lies, that it shall be held, taught, and preached by those under my government and care."

The "Form of Profession of Faith authorized by the Holy See for the whole of Christendom," and "constantly used in Rome for the reception of Protestants and Schismatics into the Catholic Church" (di Bruno, *Catholic Belief*, p.243; Twentieth Edition, 1902) contains the following statements:—

"I . . . knowing that no one can be saved without that faith which the Holy Catholic Apostolic Roman Church holds, believes, and teaches . . . I [firmly] believe all the articles that she proposes to my belief, and I reject [and condemn] all the articles that [which] she rejects and condemns, and I am ready to observe *all that she commands me*. And especially I profess that I believe . . . everything else that has been defined and declared by the Sacred Canons and by the General Councils, *especially* by the Holy Council of *Trent* and by the Ecumenical *Vatican Council* [Council of the Vatican]. With a sincere heart therefore, and with unfeigned belief [faith], I *detest* and *abjure every error, heresy, and sect* opposed to the said Holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church."

The words in square brackets are those which are given in the version by the Roman Catholic Bishop Brindle (of Nottingham) in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of 28th May, 1910, which form was used for the reception of the Princess Ena of Battenberg into the Roman Communion.

Every Romanist then, is bound to endorse the curses which the "General Councils" heap upon Protestants: the form "*anathema sit*" is nothing but a wish or prayer that the malediction of Heaven may fall upon the offending individual. It is an awful comment upon the truly Antichristian nature of Romanism, that our unhappy young Princess was thus perverted to order; made to accept implicitly *one hundred and fifty curses* against her fellow Christians, passed by Councils whose decrees she cannot have perused; forced to *detest* the Church which gave her Baptism, and first taught her the name of Christ; and in ignorance made to endorse upon oath the canons which imprecate eternal damnation over and over again upon all "heretics," including her loving Uncle, our late King, who raised her to Royal Estate, and which similarly call down the unending wrath of Almighty God upon the Mother who bore her; and herself rebaptized as though she were in no sense a Christian.

Lord Brayne and other Romish apologists find it convenient to try to minimize the meaning of "anathema" by alluding to St. Paul's use of the term (Gal. i. 8); they pretend that it means only excommunication (*Times*, 21st May, 1910). The language of St. Paul, however, does not help them until they can prove that the Church of Rome uses the word in the sense in which St. Paul uses it,

which they cannot do. If the Councils only meant “excommunication,” it was perfectly easy for them to have said so by employing the verb *excommunicare*; but on the contrary, the official documents of Rome—for instance, the decree “concerning Heretics” of the Fourth Lateran Council, and the Bull, *In Coena Domini*—draw a distinction between “anathema” and “excommunication,” as they generally run “We excommunicate AND anathematize.” The 56th Canon of the Council of Meaux, 845 A.D., says that “Anathema is the Damnation of Eternal Death” (Mansi, *Concilia*, xiv. 832). Moreover, the form from the Pontifical proves that “Anathema” is truly and properly a curse, not an excommunication merely.

The homely proverb that “People who live in glass houses should not throw stones” has a good application to the present controversy on the King’s Protestant Declaration. The Romanists are making use of one argument and of one argument only, viz., that the form of the Declaration as it now stands is “insulting” to them. In Tract 404, sections 9 and 10, we have shown the allegation to be untrue, as is done at greater length in Tract 300. But we can say that even if the Declaration does “insult” Roman Catholics, Roman Catholics are the very last people in the world who can consistently complain of “insult” from those whom they so lavishly and wantonly curse.