

is the mother of all Christian art, plastic or poetic. This separated son of hers simply cannot help himself. He has had to accept what has been given him; accept it as we accept light and air and all the influences that go to the making of man. And so Spenser has had to accept the influence of the Church involuntarily as well as of free will.

If he girds at her, may we not pity the child who knows not his mother?

He tells of a springing well whose silver flood could restore health to the sick and life to the dead. He tells of a goodly tree by God's hand planted whence ever flowed a stream of sovran balm, giving life and long health and the healing of deadly wounds. Surely drops of that water had touched his brow with their vitalizing grace; surely he knew something of the healing of that precious balm.

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Note.—It will easily be seen that I have left a very large portion of Spenser's work unsurveyed from my point of view. As Chaucer says,

I have, God wot, a large feeld to eere,
And wayke ben the oxen in my plow.

There is, indeed, a large field—larger even than seems at first sight. I shall be more than glad if I have at least opened a furrow for some one whose plow is drawn by oxen less weak than mine.

GOD'S HAPPINESS AND OURS.

AS FAR as it is possible, through the ideas we have of Him, to know God, we apply to Him certain names, and in order to express the infinity of His characteristics, we emphasize them with the help of some affixes, and we say: The Most High, the Almighty God. But there is an attribute of God of which, perhaps, we do not think enough, at least directly, although indirectly and in relation with us we make much of it. I mean *happiness*. God is to be our happiness. Why? Because He is His own happiness first, and, moreover, because He is in Himself all happy. It may not be, perhaps, a useless and fruitless task for us to contemplate this attribute both with regard to God and to ourselves; it is a theological contemplation, both high and beautiful, as well as a very practical meditation in our present day, when some thinkers go so far as to dream of a destiny for man in which neither a personal God nor a permanent possession of personality should find a place,

as if immortality meant nothing but our survival in the memory of others as long as they remember us, or as long as they themselves exist.

I.

In the first place, we must approach our subject from a metaphysical point of view. These three terms, *happiness*, *goodness*, *being*, are intimately connected one with another, and we shall deal first with the last two.

According to the very old definition, goodness is what all desire; evidently not in the sense that something cannot possibly be good except it be universally desired, but in this, that nothing can be desired unless it be good; or, to put it briefly, the object of all desires is goodness. So far this definition seems to be merely nominal; there are desires, in fact, and these desires tend to something, and this something we call good and goodness. But what is it? We can arrive at the answer by studying the very object of the desire itself. What is it that every being desires? Its own perfection; that is to say, according to the very etymology of the term, its perfect development; and to that end every being has a tendency, an "appetitus," for this latter word well expresses both the claims advanced for the possession of any element of perfection and the steps taken to grasp it. Every being abounds in beginnings which have a tendency to complete perfection. The seeds and germs are animated by a motion of development into the complete plant or animal of which they are the living principles. The bud is impelled to grow up and unfold into the radiant and perfumed flower. All its life-long the animal seeks after the satisfaction of its desires. And what is man's pursuit after truth and morality except a means of attaining to a perfect intellectual and moral being? This, then, is the general law: Every being desires its own perfection; that is to say, desires the complement of those elements which its nature demands.

We can sum up our conclusions by a series of propositions. Goodness is the object of desire; desire implies incompleteness; incompleteness and imperfection are correlative terms; therefore, desire caused by incompleteness has for its object perfection; perfection is complete development, or existence in its fullest sense. Thus we arrive at the identification of these two terms, goodness and being. Goodness is the object of desire; it is desired because it is perfection; it is perfection because it is being.¹

Let us now consider God and try to apply to Him the notions we have just defined. The correct idea of God's goodness may be expressed in the following short definition: The goodness of God

¹ Sum. Theol., 1a., Q. 5.

is in the very measure of His being. But what is He? If we apply the three well-known methods or "ways of *causality, negation, eminency*," we may conclude at once: By the first, that, as He is the first Cause of all things, He must be all things; by the second, we modify the inaccuracy of the foregoing assertion and say that He cannot be all things as they are; by the third, we sum up the former results and arrive at the conclusion that He is all things eminently, that is to say, in a higher mode of being. He is *perfect*, as the first Cause of all perfections.

But this very word "perfect" must change its ordinary meaning when applied to God, as St. Gregory says: "In halting speech, as far as our weakness permits, we proclaim the high things of God; the Unmade cannot be said to be made up." We can, however, use the word with a corrective: God is made up, He is the sum total of perfection, but without succession, without acquisition, without addition, at once, by His very nature, from eternity. He is all-perfect, that is to say, He has all the perfections which are scattered abroad through this world, but He has them unsullied by the **conjunction of earthly imperfections**. Further, He does not possess them in a composite manner, because all that is in Him is blended together in the utmost simplicity and oneness. Furthermore, not only is He the sum total of all the perfections in which creatures share, which belong to Him as their centre and cause, but He has all possible perfections because there is no cause of Himself, because He is self-existent, because He *is*.² And under that name God presented Himself to Moses: "I am, who am." This appellation ranks first amongst those ascribed to God because it embraces all others in its unity; even as being embraces everything in itself. It is peculiarly applicable to God, because He is "the infinite and unbounded Ocean of Substance," to quote the far-reaching words of St. John Damascene.³

God is, and therefore is good, and the characters of His goodness coincide with the characters of His being. And how infinitely does the divine goodness tower above that of poor created beings. In our being, which is a limited essence called out of nothing, we have the first degree of our perfection and goodness; but how imperfect and how dependent for its progress is it upon the powers and tendencies within us and upon other things without. And, when by those three steps we have reached some stage of goodness, or even the highest at which our nature may aim, then, as we had to attain it by the law of progress, immediately our further efforts are arrested by the law of decay. How deeply did St. Augustine feel it, and how

² Sum. Theol., 1a., Q. 4.

³ Sum. Theol., 1a., Q. 13, art. 11.

pathetic are his words: "Whithersoever the soul of man turns itself, unless towards Thee, it is rivetted upon sorrows; yea, though it is rivetted upon things beautiful. . . . They rise and set, and by rising they begin, as it were, to be; they grow that they may be perfected; and perfected, they wax old and wither; and all grow not old, but all wither. So, then, when they rise and tend to be, the more quickly they grow that they may be, so much the more they haste not to be. This is the law of them."⁴ But it is not so with God. His essence is one with His existence, and so is not this or that way of being, but Being itself; there are no powers surrounding it of increasing His goodness, since His goodness, like His being, is infinite, and there are outside Him no other things from which He could get any increase; and, lastly, as there is no beginning nor progress, there is no decay and no end in God, the King of Eternity.⁵

As God is goodness because He is being, so is He happiness because He is goodness. We need not here conclude from the fact that there is happiness in creatures that it exists also in their Creator; it is enough to know that in Him there is goodness; the conclusion, therefore, that there is consequently happiness is evident to any one who knows what happiness means, which is "nothing else than the perfect good of an intellectual being, capable, as such, of knowing its sufficiency in the good which it possesses. . . . Both these conditions belong to God in the most excellent form. Therefore happiness supremely belongs to God."⁶ He is the Most-Happy God. What is in the ontological order a want of being and perfection is, in the psychological order, a desire and a suffering, when such want is felt by consciousness. On the other hand, what is satisfaction of this want, and consequently of this desire, is pleasure, and, in a higher degree, happiness. So numerous and commonplace would be the examples that it is better to omit them and to form our opinion, on the ground of evidence, *that* in God there is supreme happiness.

But when we try to find out and to describe *what* is divine happiness, once more we encounter the same difficulty—to know the unknowable, to utter the unutterable. Here also lie open before us some ways of imperfect knowledge as a path at the foot of a lofty Sinai, leading to its summit, which disappears amidst a cloud of dazzling light. By the way of causality, we ascend from creatures to God; and we conclude that "every earthly shadow of happiness, however small it may be, existed before, perfectly, in the divine

⁴ Confess., Book IV., Ch. X.

⁵ Sum. Theol., 1a., Q. 6, art. 3.

⁶ Sum. Theol., 1a., Q. 26, art. 1.

happiness." And if we try to analyze and reckon up all these shadows of happiness which are to be found around us, we shall draw, with human colors, a very faint picture of the divine happiness. As for the happiness of contemplation, God has the continuous, most certain and perfect insight of Himself and all things. As for that of action, He has the government, not of one man, of one city, of one kingdom, but of the whole universe. As for that which men dream of finding in pleasure, riches, power, dignity and glory, God has His pleasure in the most excellent enjoyment of Himself and all good, without any mixture of evil; He has His riches in the perfect sufficiency which any wealth could promise; He has His power in His infinite might; His dignity rests in the headship and government of all things; He has His glory in the admiration of all creatures, according to the measure of their knowledge."⁷

But we must, at this point, apply the method of negation to correct the imperfections of such a picture. Happiness represents for us, and is defined accordingly, the union and accumulation of all good things. They are in God, indeed, but not by way of composition, but of simplicity, because, as we have said before in speaking of perfections, that which is composite in many creatures preëxists in the one God in simplicity and unity. We also represent happiness as the reward of virtue, but that is not essential to happiness; it is a mere fact that happens to those who deserve and acquire their happiness, just as to be generated happens to those who begin to be. But as God has His being without having been born, so He has His happiness without any previous merit, the contrary implying that there could be a time when He had neither happiness nor being.⁸

Lastly, by the way of eminency, our mind soars upwards to God Himself and sings to Him: "O, God, we know that Thou art the Most Happy God, but what is the nature of Thy happiness we do not know, as we are likewise ignorant of Thy very being. We know that all happiness in the world created by Thee must needs be in Thee most perfectly; but we know also that there must be in Thee a happiness of Thy own, although we cannot even fix our eyes upon that Inaccessible Light in which Thou contemplatest Thyself and lovest Thyself, not alone, yet not many, One and Three, in the unspeakableness of Thy eternal ecstasy."

II.

God's happiness is in Himself, but where is our happiness? The general answer is simple: Without God or in God. First of all

⁷ Sum. Theol., 1a., Q. 26, art. 4. Sum. c. Gent. lib. I. c. 102.

⁸ Sum. Theol., 1a., Q. 26, art. 1, ad 1 et 2.

that there must be some is a conclusion which seems to spring out of the very depths of our nature. Naturally we all aspire towards our well-being and perfection, but where is happiness to be sought and found? Many things, indeed, can give us happiness, and therefore be pursued as definite ends of our activity; but what things can give us perfect happiness, and therefore be pursued as the end above and beyond all others, as our ultimate end?

Will it be riches, "which seem to supply whatever men can desire?" They can be, at most, an instrument for purchasing happiness which they do not contain in themselves. Will it be honor, glory, power? These three are insufficient, for one may have them and be at the same time perfectly unhappy. They remain, as it were, outside us. The first two are only signs, sometimes very deceptive ones, of some eminence and perfection, and the third may be an instrument of good or evil for him who possesses it. Will it be pleasure? That, indeed, is more closely connected with our very being, but though our body is part of ourselves, it is not our better self, our very self. Our intellectual soul is in some way infinite compared with that portion of matter to which it is united; the welfare of our body must be of little consequence compared with the welfare of our soul, much less can it be our perfect good and happiness. We are compound of a **body and a soul**, but the former is for the latter, and it would be an abuse to make the soul nothing more than the purveyor of our body. Not so, but as we naturally prefer our body to all external things, so we ought to prefer our soul to our body.

Therefore, if there is any true happiness at all for us, it is to be found in our soul. But our soul is not self-sufficient; it has powers of knowledge and powers of love. On what, then, can it exercise these powers to give us perfection and happiness? Moreover, these powers of ours are great, immeasurably great; they go beyond all material and concrete things to their general ideas and laws, beyond all particular perfections and beauties to their ideal and type; beyond this world, with its order, magnitude, splendor, being, to the One above, the principle and cause of such order, magnitude, splendor and being.

Are we not stranded between a double view of happiness equally unsatisfactory? On the one hand, a kind of happiness too low and too little; on the other hand, a kind of happiness too high and too unattainable. Yea, all earthly happiness is too little or at least too brief, as it has "an answer of death." So far hedonism is wrong and pessimism is right. Yea, if there is happiness at all for us, perfect happiness, I mean, worth being pursued as equal to our very being, it must be from God and in God, in whom we can have the accumulation of all good through our union with Him, who is the

universal spring of all good; but is such ideal happiness attainable, and which are right—the optimists of hope or the pessimists of despair?⁹

Why has God created us? This is indeed the question. To fulfill what end? This question is implied in the more general one: Why has God created at all? That God had a reason and an end in creating is beyond dispute; to act for an end is the law of all agents; they must act determinately for this or that end, for from an indetermined cause nothing would follow. Much more is it the law of intelligent causes, as we experience in ourselves in the deliberation of our intelligence and the choice of our will, and much more is it so in the Supreme Intelligence.

Now, what is the end of God's actions? Here appears the difference between God, the Infinite and Uncreated, and the finite and created beings. The latter may act in order to transmit to others something of their being, perfection and goodness; but as they are perfectible as well as in some degree perfect, they endeavor to gain for themselves something at the same time; thus they act as by a law of exchange, of action and reaction, intending together to give of their goodness and to add something to it.

It is not and cannot be so with God. On the one hand, God is solitary, in the sense that before creation there was no other being at all besides Himself; and on the other hand, He is fully self-sufficient. These terms, granted as they must be, the question supplies the answer. For what end did God create? For Himself, because nothing was but Himself. He is the First Cause in the order of finality as well as in the order of efficiency. Everything comes from God, and in some way or other everything must return to God, just as the ocean is the primary cause of all waters, from which they rise up and are condensed into clouds, float in the air and then fall down in flakes of snow upon the lofty white-headed mountains; at their feet the rivers spring forth and carry the waters back to the place of their birth.

God has, therefore, created all things for Himself. As He is the Cause, so is He the End of all things. But we must rightly understand how God is such an end. It is not as a result that is to be obtained by the composition of all things, as some modern pantheists have maintained (for their theory is that God's perfection is in process of completion), but as something already existing and which is to be reached by every being according to its own nature and in its own way. It is not as if all things struggled to obtain some good for God, as soldiers fight to obtain victory for their King. No, God is not the end of all things in the sense that He may acquire anything

⁹ Sum. Theol., 1a., 2ae., Qq. 2 et 3.

through them, but rather as something to be acquired by them. He is not in want of anything, but, on the contrary, He bestows His gifts with unsparing hand from His inexhaustible treasury. When the earth turns up to the sun its side which had been hidden from it during the night, the sun itself remains unchanged and simply lavishes upon it some of the bright and warming rays of its glorious crown. As a consequence redounding to the glory of our God, He is the only truly and infinitely generous One, as He is the only One truly and infinitely rich, in whom is no lack and therefore no want; He gives, but does not receive.¹⁰

So, then, God has created all beings for Himself, that is to say, that they may reach, acquire, possess His own goodness. But we ought to explain immediately such an assertion by recalling that every being is all that it is by and from God, as an emanation, a participation, a reproduction and truly something of the goodness of God. Thus we may say both that everything is good by the Divine goodness, and that everything is good by its own goodness; the one and the other affirmation not being contradictory, since everything has in itself a goodness inherent in itself, which is really its own and on account of which it may be called good; and since, also, the goodness of everything comes entirely from God's goodness. So that we may say that there is one goodness of all, and, at the same time, that there is more than one. It is just the same with the good as with being. Plato's theory of Separate Ideas is true for once. There is something real separated from this material world which is first being and good by its own essence and from which every other thing holds its being and goodness.¹¹

As a consequence, God's goodness appears to us in a twofold aspect—in the world and in Himself. In the world it is nothing more than His goodness, or, as we have explained, a shadow of His goodness; but in Himself it is His goodness unfolding into His happiness. Now, all created beings, every one according to its own nature, desire God, since they cannot but desire good, and there is nothing good except by the goodness of God spread all through this world by creation. The rational creature has an immense and twofold privilege, first by his nature and secondly by the grace of God—viz., the power of rising up to God Himself, "*Homo est capax Dei*," man has a capacity for God, that is, he can know and love God Himself. The supernatural order consists essentially of God's own self in Himself, beyond the natural order of beings and laws created by God, and in such a superior order we have our place, since we are called by God to enjoy with Him life eternal. We can participate

¹⁰ Sum. Theol., 1a., Q. 44, art. 4.

¹¹ Sum. Theol., 1a., Q. 6, art. 4.

in the divine goodness, as it is in itself, through our acts of knowing and loving God. And therefore God is preëminently the end towards which the rational creature moves, desiring the divine goodness itself, of which the irrational creature desires an image only.

So God's goodness appears to us in three degrees—the supreme degree, as perfectly possessed by God Himself, who is His own goodness and happiness; the second degree, as capable of being possessed by us, not as an integral part of our being, but as so known and loved by us that we may be said to take our share in the goodness and happiness of God; the third degree, as it may be possessed not in itself, but through the medium of all the good things created by God and presented here below in and to all creatures. Thus other beings may be said to have been made in some way for the goodness of God; *we* are made for the very happiness of God.¹²

We hold by faith that we have to find our happiness in God, and this belief is entirely consistent with the superior instinct of our nature, when it becomes conscious of itself and takes cognizance of the vanity of created things and of itself among them. Unto what will that happiness be like? As we have tried to represent to ourselves God's happiness through our human ideas of earthly happiness, so we may try to picture our happiness.

We must not too much despise created things; it would be a mistake. They are insufficient, indeed, as our ultimate end, but they are good and can certainly bestow a certain amount of happiness upon us. But, moreover, all that they do and can do in this respect we are sure to find in God, since every kind of goodness and perfection found in various creatures is gathered totally and as one in their Creator as in the source of all goodness. Thus, if we can draw happiness from the brooks, with what rapture shall we drink from the very source, which is a boundless and fathomless ocean!

Thus all goodness will be found in God by us, and therefore all our desires satisfied and our happiness fulfilled. Our desire as intellectual beings of knowing the truth will be satisfied by seeing all truths together in the very light of the First Cause and last explanation of them all. Our desire as moral beings of ruling over ourselves and ordaining everything within us according to reason and right conscience will be abundantly satisfied by a clear perception of and intense devotion to the Eternal Law, beyond all question of deficiency. Our desire of honor will be gratified by our elevation to the supreme dignity of union with God and of a share in His eternal Kingship. God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived, will crown our desire of praise and glory by bestowing those same marks upon us. We shall receive the fullness of riches in the possession of One

¹² Sec. II. Sent., dist. 1, Q. 2, art. 2.

who comprehends in the most complete and perfect degree all that is good. With what depth and with what rapture will not such a One be beloved by us! Although such a happiness is beyond the reach of our senses, our body itself will share in it; happiness is for the whole man, but beginning in his superior and immortal, and overflowing upon his inferior and material part. Our body here below darkens and materializes the soul, but hereafter our soul will enlighten and spiritualize our very body, as the night begins at the foot of the mountains and climbs up to their peaks, and as the morning sun touches their peaks first and creeps along their sides to enwrap them in a robe of light.¹⁸

When we have thus tried to express with the elements of earthly happiness the heavenly one, we must confess that it is nothing more than a mere drawing from life, which is powerless to give the relief, the colors, the expression, the very life of the original. The heavenly happiness will be all we can conceive, yet not like, but infinitely superior to it. Our belief outdistances our knowledge of it. "Thou shalt fill me with joy with Thy countenance." (Ps. xv., 11.) "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what things God hath prepared for them that love Him." (I. Cor. ii., 9.) These two words express our faith and our humility. Let these two virtues serve as wings to carry us up to God's happiness, which is also to be ours, through His infinite goodness, forever and ever.

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¹⁸ Sum., Contra Gent., Lib. III., cap. 63.

THE FRENCH ECCLESIASTICAL REVOLUTION.

III.

THE Court of Cassation on May 17, pronouncing upon the Ministerial appeal against the judgment in the case of Abbé Jouin (see page 297 of this REVIEW), upheld the ruling and phraseology that is so awkward for all legislating blocards who, as I contend, voted in 1905 or executed in 1906 and this year unconstitutional enactments. The Appeal Court strikes out from the text of the important judgment merely this first ground (*motif*) alleged by the Correctional Tribunal for its verdict: "Attenuating circumstances are found in the fact that defendant's personal feelings of