

“The reign of Leopold I, which lasted for 34 years, was most felicitous for Belgium, and the religious difference

between the king and his people never had the slightest influence on their happy relations.”



“Pass It to Your Neighbor”

Duke Charles William, of Brunswick, was a pious sovereign, and attached much importance to the strict observance of Sundays and festivals.

He once learned that in a certain town a number of workmen were accustomed to meet in a tavern at the hour of divine service and there pass the time in carousing which they should have devoted to the worship of God. In vain had the priests and the civil authorities protested against this abuse; the drinkers continued their wicked course in spite of all admonitions and threats of punishment. The pious noble-man was greatly displeased to hear of such scandalous conduct, and resolved to reprove it without delay.

Putting on an old overcoat, the Duke took his way one morning to the tavern. The bells in the church-tower were calling the faithful together, when the band of tipplers, preceded by a large, fat man, with a rubicund nose and shining face, presented themselves at the accustomed place.

Taking his seat at the head of the table, the leader made a sign to the Duke to sit at his right hand, at the same time scrutinizing him closely, as if he felt some suspicions, never having met the stranger at a tavern before. Meanwhile the proprietor brought in a demijohn of brandy, which he set before the head of the table. The latter took it up in both hands, drank freely, and then handed it to the Duke, saying, “Pass it to your neighbor.”

The demijohn thus made the round

of the table, and returned to the one presiding, who, after kissing it lovingly, and taking another long draught, handed it again to the Duke: and thus it went from tippler to tippler, each one saying as he gave it to the next in turn, “Pass it to your neighbor.”

When the pitcher came to him the third time, the Duke arose indignantly, threw open his long coat, so that all could see his well-known uniform and his insignia of sovereignty, and with his full force gave the leader a blow in the face, repeating his words: “Pass it to your neighbor.” And as the man hesitated somewhat, the Duke exclaimed, threateningly: “If any one of you strikes too gently, let him fear for himself, because I will know how to do him full justice.”

The threat had its effect: hands were raised, and blows and screams followed with the noise of thunder, until the Prince, satisfied with the singular punishment he had inflicted, gave a sign to disperse in silence. The tipplers, for once, were glad to take their departure from the tavern, and not one of them felt tempted to revisit the place on the following Sunday. They probably did not soon forget, “Pass it to your neighbor.”

If in the Philippines there were a “pass it to your neighbor” of the Duke Charles William’s kind, number two, for all those who do not go to mass on Sundays but the devil some day may give those negligent catholics worse than a “pass it to your neighbor.”

You can assure your salvation by saving others.