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"HEAR THE CHURCH!"

In these days of doubt and open infidelity, when the very foundations of Truth itself are too often scanned with irreverent eye, there is one manifestation which ought not to pass unheeded, as it serves to show God's way of making even the wrath of man to praise Him. So long as Christians are divided by Sectarianism, the world will not believe that the Father hath sent the Son. Thus has Sectarianism induced Christians to consent to the elimination of definite religious instruction from common school education, and not content with that, some are earnestly striving to banish it from the education of the University. Like Pontius Pilate, too many indolently ask, "What is truth?" and then pass on to surrender the truth to its worst enemy—Sectarianism.

"Hear the Church," is our Lord's own direction to those bewildered among many counsellors, but it requires some courage in these days to point to Christ's visible Church on earth. Yet there are some exceedingly important questions which sectarians will in time be driven to see cannot be satisfactorily settled by the Bible alone, but must be explained by the teaching voice of the Church.

For some years, by means of the secular papers, some sensation-monger in Halifax has been challenging ordinary Christians to tread on his theological coat-tail, offering a money prize to any who may be able to overcome him in controversy on certain orthodox questions. His particular hobbies seem to be—first, that no such doctrine as the eternal punishment of the finally impenitent is to be found in the Bible (*i. e.*, as he understands it); and, secondly, that there is no Scriptural obligation upon any Christian to keep one day in every seven holy to the Lord and free from merely secular occupations and amusements.

As to the first, it is indeed a hopeless task to convince a man against his will; but when we see the learned Canon Farrar, the clever author of "Eternal Hope," at length driven to disavow Universalism, we may certainly leave our Halifax doubter to read more carefully the many Bible texts of awful warning to such as determinedly turn their backs on the offer of life.

His second negation has sorely puzzled the sectarian mind. So far as we have seen, not one has been able to prove from Scripture alone that Christians are bound to keep the Sabbath, and it is safe to say that none ever will prove it. So much for the absurdity of using a term which confounds the Saturday with Sunday or the Lord's Day. There is nothing so entangling as the use of ambiguous or incorrect terminology.

It is in vain that his adversaries have argued the reasonableness and the necessity of devoting to God one-seventh of our time—the challenge is still "Show me that the Bible commands the keeping of the Sabbath free from secular labour or pleasure."

There is one answer to this and all such challenges—"Hear the Church." We admit that there is no Scriptural command as to the change of day; but the Lord's Day has, from the very beginning of Christianity, been substituted for the Jewish Sabbath. We expect you next to challenge us to prove from the Bible that women should be admitted to the Lord's Supper, or to show from the Bible itself that it contains all that should be received by Christians as the Bible—neither less nor more. The Canons of the Church of Christ will furnish you with material for challenges such as these, if it be

your desire to give comfort to the doubter and furnish arguments to the unbeliever. If Sectarianism shrinks from adducing this argument, behold in this fact the weakness of Sectarianism, and the aid which it is compelled to yield to mere secularism and ultimate infidelity.

THE FAITH, MINISTRY AND SACRAMENTS.

The Church of England believes that there was a "Faith once delivered to the Saints," handed down from age to age which is found in Holy Scripture, summed up in the Apostles' Creed, and affirmed by the undisputed General Councils. This Faith her children recite whenever they assemble for public worship, and, in common with the Primitive Church, she requires an honest and intelligent assent to its articles before admission to her Communion. She holds, in common with the Christians of the first century, that the Ministry in three orders is of Divine appointment; that the Apostles were inspired to organize the Church of God, and that the witness of history and the evidence of Holy Scripture prove the existence of these orders from the beginning. She holds also to the two Sacraments as of Divine appointment. These are our fundamental principles—the great landmarks by which we are known—and we cling to them with a tenacity born of eighteen centuries of adherence to New Testament doctrine. Others may flout and jibe at principles and notes of the Church of God which were the precious heritage of the faithful centuries before the representatives of man-made bodies came into existence. The Church of England, planted in our Mother Land in the first century, reformed, not created anew, in the sixteenth, can afford to let their reckless and unhistorical assertions pass for what they are worth. We have neither added to nor diminished the articles of the Creed. On speculative subjects, and concerning non-essentials, there is in our Communion, thank God, the largest liberty of opinion; we would not have it otherwise. A sect is formed on the exaggeration of some one or two doctrines. The Church of God must have the Faith in due proportion, brought in regular order before the people, and be comprehensive enough to include all who believe the Holy Scriptures to be the rule of Faith and Jesus Christ to be the Divine and Eternal Son. Apostolic Faith and Apostolic Order. Few will be found to deny that the Creed contains the substance of Apostolic Faith, and we are equally strong in our belief that we inherit a Ministry of Apostolic Order. We are prepared to prove this, and it has been proved by writer after writer, from the evidence of Scripture, the evidence of antiquity, and the admission of adversaries, *vide*, for instance, "Marshall's Notes on the Episcopal Polity of the Holy Catholic Church," and an admirable pamphlet, by Dr. Hugh Miller Thompson, "Concerning the Kingdom of God." As the learned Hooker said 300 years ago, "We require you to find one Church on the face of the whole earth that hath not been ordered by Episcopal regimen since the time that the blessed Apostles were here conversant." And as to those singularly misunderstood words, "Apostolic Succession," which is simply an historical fact, and not a doctrine, our readers will note that "some of the functions of the Apostles were ordinary and permanent, such as those of preaching, administering the Sacraments, exercising discipline, confirming the baptized, ordaining and superintending ministers. The other functions of the Apostles were extraordinary and temporary, such as healing the sick, casting out devils, and speaking with tongues. Bishops succeed the Apostles in their ordinary functions, but not in their extraordinary offices." Our readers will best adorn the doctrine of their Saviour by believing and living the doctrines of the Creed; they will honour Him by honouring and making use of the Sacraments of His appointment, and they dare not disparage or separate from a Ministry which was universal in Christendom until the past few hundred years, and the loss of which Calvin, Beza, and other Puritan leaders deplored as a hard necessity of the times in which their lot was cast.

ON ALCOHOL.

The Temperance Question occupies altogether a different and more satisfactory position today from what it did twenty-five or thirty years ago, and from what its warmest and most sanguine advocates could at that time have anticipated for it. It was even then, after many years of faithful and persistent effort of Total Abstinence Societies, simply a move-

ment against the evils of excessive drinking, a work to reclaim the fallen, and to save others from falling through over-indulgence. But few thought of going so far as to recognize in Alcohol an unmitigated curse, most persons considering it a necessary evil, doing a great deal of harm, but also doing an immense amount of good. True, the good it did could not be seen, while the evils were only too apparent, still, did not the doctors, who knew all about it, speak of it in terms of praise? did they not use it themselves and recommend it to their friends and patients? And so the crusade went on against the effects of Alcohol, not against the thing itself. If Prohibition was thought of, it was born of the inquiry,—How can we save the drunkard? while the serious consequences which, of course, (as it was thought,) must ensue from the passage of such a law, completely disheartened those who longed to have the temptation removed from the drunkard's reach. That it was food to the system, the doctors were all agreed upon, while that in every sickness it was simply indispensable, was as unreservedly accepted as true. Of recent years, however, the subject has been approached from another standpoint. The honest and capable scientific student has made it his study, and the result has been that the old views cannot any longer be held. Science has spoken even more strongly against it than the most philanthropic friend of the poor slave to its use.

Among other leading physicians who have given the subject much attention, is Dr. Andrew Clark, admittedly at the head of his profession in England.

"Dr. Andrew Clark lately delivered an evening address on alcohol, in the Great Portland Street School-rooms, London, to a crowded and deeply interested audience. He said he purposed offering a few informal remarks upon the influence of alcoholic drinks upon health, upon work, upon disease, and upon the succeeding generation. This question of alcohol was of the first importance to us as a nation and as individuals, and hence a great responsibility rested upon those who professed to speak upon it with authority. He ventured to say that he knew something about this question. For twenty-five years he had been physician to one of the largest hospitals in this country (the London Hospital), and there, as elsewhere, it had been a part of his business in life to ascertain the influence which alcoholic drinks exercised upon health, and he had with deep interest and attention striven to get at the truth of the matter. In the first place, let him distinctly say that alcohol was a poison, as were also strychnine, arsenic, and opium; but in certain small doses strychnine, arsenic, and opium were useful in special circumstances, and in very minute doses alcohol could also be used without any obvious prejudicial effect upon health. He was not going to discuss what these minute doses were, save to say that they were very minute. A perfect state of health (and it was rarely to be found) could not be benefitted by alcohol in any degree, and in nine times out of ten it was injured by it. He said this not as a total abstainer, though he earnestly hoped that all the rising generation would be. Instead of the ideal state of health which might be enjoyed save for the nature of our surroundings, the sins of our parents, and our own sins, there was a sort of secondary health possessed by most of us, and what did alcohol do for this?

He had two answers to give—that this sort of health bore apparently with alcohol better than the other, and sometimes seemed as if benefitted by it; and this was exactly the sort of health that formed the great debating ground of different people with respect to the use of alcohol. Secondly, there were some nervous people always ailing, yet never ill, for whom he had a profound sympathy, who seemed to derive great comfort from alcohol, and to those he had sometimes said, "Take a little beer or wine, but take great care never to go beyond the minute dose." He did not defend this, but simply stated it to show what he thought. As to the influence of alcohol upon work, Dr. Clark went on to encourage his hearers to try the experiment of total abstinence, and observe the result in regard to work. Let them, however, try it fairly, and not allow themselves to be deterred from it by the evil prognostications of friends. He was certain that if this experiment were tried, each individual present would come to the conclusion that alcohol was not a helper of work, but, on the contrary, a hinderer.

Now as to the effect of alcohol on disease. He went through the wards of his hospital to-day and asked himself how many cases there were due to natural and unavoidable causes and how many to drink, and he came, after careful thought, to the

conclusion that seven out of ten owed their ill-health to alcohol. He did not say that these were excessive drinkers or drunkards—in fact, it was not the drunkards who suffered most from alcohol, but the moderate drinkers who exceeded the physiological quantity. The drunkard very often was an abstainer for months together after a period of intemperance, but the moderate drinker went steadily to work undermining his constitution, and preparing himself for premature decay and death. He had no means of finding out how many victims alcohol claimed each year, but certainly more than three-fourths of the disorders of fashionable life arose from the drug of which he was speaking. Finally, Dr. Clark dwelt upon the heredity of the alcoholic taint, and closed by saying that sometimes when he thought of all this conglomeration of evils he was disposed to rush to the opposite extreme—to give up his profession, to give up everything, and to enter upon a holy crusade, preaching to all men everywhere to beware of this enemy of the race."

WESLEYANISM AND BAPTISM.

Our Wesleyan friends are having what the Yankees call a big time of it just now over in London. They have got a Conference of Methodists gathered from all the world. At that Assembly some very good things have been said. To a few of them we shall direct the attention of our readers, as containing some ideas useful for both Churchmen and Methodists, and which, certainly, must have been both startling and novel to some of our worthy Wesleyan brethren. Thus, on Saturday last, they had a discussion on the Relation of Children to Methodism, when they acknowledged that they were not in a very satisfactory state on this point. Their young people fell away from them, and even as regards the few who remained, the Conference had not any very clever view in what light they should regard them. One speaker urged that all children should be regarded as members of the Church, because they were in covenant with God through Baptism. Mr. Pope, an Ex-President of the Conference, went farther still. Discussing the value and use of Catechetical Instruction, he laid down, what we would commend to some of our clergy, "the sacred and blessed fact that, behind, and around, and beneath all Catechetical Instruction, there is a specific gift of the Holy Spirit to our children sealed to them in Baptism." Such a view is, we fear, with much more of orthodoxy, fast losing ground in Wesleyanism. In fact, that system is now discovering the essential weakness of its own position. It was founded by Wesley to be a Society within the Church. It now pretends to be a Church. Wesley founded it to be a Society of Adults consciously seeking to flee from the wrath to come. According to its original constitution, therefore, there was no provision for infants and young children. Modern Methodism is, therefore, at a loss about their proper treatment and true *locus standi*. Their perplexity on this point came out much more strongly at the late Liverpool Conference than in the London Meeting. Our Revisionist friends in Ireland may not know that their agitation had results beyond their own borders. The beginning of strife was like the letting out of water to many more than to themselves. If Irish Calvinists proposed to revivify their Services, surely, said English Arminians, we must do the same. Headed, therefore, by Mr. Arthur, an English Wesleyan of Irish birth, they appointed a Committee in 1871 "to remove from their offices," which were in the main identical with ours, "every expression inconsistent with our Evangelical Protestantism." Here certainly was a very wide and roving commission. The result has not been so fortunate as with ourselves. The Committee set to work on the baptismal offices, and if we are to believe some of the speakers at the Conference, they have, in doing so, advanced rapidly along that downward path of rationalism, which dissent in every shape seems destined, one day more or less, surely to follow. Two of their ablest ministers, Mr. F. W. Macdonald and Mr. G. O. Bate, distinctly asserted that "the solemn and pathetic statement of the doctrine of original sin, seeing that all men are conceived and born in sin," had been entirely removed from the service. Again, Mr. Bate urged that "instead of a form suited to the administration of a Sacrament, the Committee had given them a form suited to a dedicatory rite." One fact came out very strongly in the debate on this question. Wesleyanism is now distinctly divided into two schools. One school holds to the old sacramental views of Wesley and Richard Watson, both of whom held what is usually called "Baptis-