

He speaks the words that his natural sympathies dictate as he listens to the story of those who need his moral and spiritual help; if he would simply commence by having a fellow-feeling with them, giving them, in words of kindness, the benefit of his own experience of life, he would soon find out what God would have him do.

And so it is with those even who take a more prominent stand. If you listen to those who address temperance meetings, or Bible classes, or the little gatherings that come to mission rooms in the city, or cottage lectures in the country, you will find that the men whose words carry the most influence to the hearts about them are not the eloquent speakers or the ready debaters, but the men who have arisen above the thought of self, and who, in their yearning to assist others, utter simply and naturally the message of comfort or helpfulness which their own hearts bid them speak to other souls.

Strange it is that the two forces of which the Church stands most in need to-day are *common sympathy* and *common sense*, and the lay-helper who possesses both these qualities, who combines in himself deep spiritualities and practical sense, a cool brain and warm heart, is the worker who is most needed in every parish of the land.

Lastly, if we are to be laborers together with God, we should ceaselessly remember that the work we are doing is God's work, not ours; and that if God has given us our own peculiar gift, He has also assigned a corresponding gift to each one of those brethren who are laboring at our side. The work is to grow not in *our* way, but in God's way, and it can only thus be blessed when all the workers are of one mind and one heart, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Paul plants, Apollos waters, but it is God who giveth the increase.

Oftentimes, when a man becomes intensely earnest in any matter, in proportion to his earnestness will be his feeling that his own plan is the best plan, his own way, the only way. This is human nature, but we must learn to discipline our human nature. How many Church workers there are who begin with the most enthusiastic zeal, but who soon drop out of the ranks, just because their own selfish plans are rejected; how few there are who retain their earnestness and persevere even when their cherished schemes are declared to be impracticable.

The Church is God's household, and there must be discipline in God's household as well as in every human home. St. Paul himself learned this lesson. And when he wrote to his converts of the dispensation of the Grace of God which was given to him, the very words that he uses and which we translate as dispensation or stewardship is *oekonomia*, the law of the household.

One of the very first lessons that we all have to learn, in doing Church work, is, while we keep our earnestness, to surrender with an unconditional surrender our self-will to God's Will, as it is expressed by those whom God has placed over us in His work, or by the majority of our fellow-workers. Whether that decision be right or wrong it is for us, God's will; and if we pray as earnestly and unceasingly about our work, as every Church worker must do who hopes to succeed, then we may be sure that God gives us this lesson to learn and this cross to bear to train us for a more important work by and by.

Remember our success is to be gauged not so much by what we *do* as by what we *are*, and the man who has the most of the Spirit of God in his heart is always the man who can do the most for God in the world.

What matters it if the work that God gives us be small or great so long as it is His work, and we do it in the Name of the Lord Jesus? It must be great, if our motive be great. It

must have its purposes, its meaning, its history, if God assigns it to us, for—

"Each single struggle hath its far vibration,
Working results that work results again;
Failure and death are no annihilation;
Our tears absorbed will make some future rain.

"True it is we may not live in story,
But we may be waves within a tide;
Help the human flood to near the glory,
That shall shine when we have tolled and died.

"Therefore, though few praise or help or heed us,
Let us work with head and heart and hand:
For we know the future ages need us,
We must help our time to take its stand.

"Let us toll on, the work we leave behind us,
Though incomplete, God's hand will yet embalm,
And use some way; and the news will find us
In Heaven above to sweeten endless calm."

HENRY Y. SATTERLEE,
—in the *Churchman*.

EARL NELSON ON THE ATHANASIAN CREED.

The *Christian World*—a paper with a large circulation among members of the different Christian bodies, and one which thereby might do great things for the cause of Christian unity—gave out in a leader on "Reverence in Theology" an utterly mistaken view of the purport and origin of this Creed.

It is with great pain and no little reluctance that I give the following extracts, but it is necessary in the cause of Christian unity that such statement should be answered.

The words I refer to are these:—"The Athanasian Creed, at the end of a revolting attempt to discuss the mystery of the Trinity [as though it were a subtle point of law, concludes by declaring that everybody who fails to take precisely this view of that mystery shall without doubt perish everlastingly."

"The irreverence of such a creed appears to us to be even a more formidable objection to it than its self-contradicting absurdities. By vain metaphysics it first belittles the Infinite and then snatches at the divine thunder to blast everyone who will not construct a deity after the same fashion."

The Creed is a collection of the decisions of Ecumenical Councils of the undivided Church against various heretical attempts to define and explain the great mysteries of the faith; and if the writer of these sad words will carefully consult the history of the Church and of these Ecumenical Councils he will find that by these rulings the Church attempted to define nothing. Her great duty was, and ever will be, to hand down *undefiled* the Two great truths entrusted to her teaching:—(1) The mystery of the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, and (2) the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God.

As in the present day, so of old, from the first ages of the Christian Church, it was those who separated from *The Church who added to her credenda*—seeking to define the indefinable, and exalting their metaphysical attempts to explain what had been revealed into essential verities. In the same way now each fresh schism adds to the credenda, and would make the latest addition of its own particular Shibboleth of greater importance than the eternal verities themselves.

So far from irreverently attempting to define the mysteries confided to her keeping, the Church has ever sought to guard the sacred deposit against the false definitions which the arch-heretics put forth from time to time to destroy the unity of the Church.

These false definitions have been one and all considered and exposed as they arose, and these denials of what is false have cleared the way to what is true, so that the work of the heretics has been overruled to build up and make stronger the defences of the faith.

When these different forms of heresy first arose they did not appear to be of such great importance, but as the new views were more

fully expanded it was shown that the logical deductions from them led to a distinct denial of some essential verity, and those who first followed the new definitions as a speculative idea ended in an open denial of the faith. Then the Church in her Councils, which we believe were overruled by the Holy Ghost, gave her decisions against the corrupt views; and these decisions were finally accepted by all the members of the Church. Thus the Creed which records these various decisions in nearly every verse condemns some distinct heresy; and contains not a new definition, but the denial of some false definition; and thus becomes a sign-post to warn unstable souls against the false definition which would lead them unwarily, as in former times it had led others, to the denial of universally accepted (or Catholic) truth.

A great deal of nonsense is talked about the damnable clauses of this Creed. They point out that these various heresies, denounced one by one, will lead men who have once accepted the faith, away from the essential doctrines of the Christian revelation, and therefore place them outside the covenanted blessings. Those who have broken away from Christian unity, either by making essential an erroneous definition of the faith, or by giving undue prominence to one side of an eternal truth, have always made their particular view a necessity of salvation, and, though not in the same words, have practically added an anathema against those who reject their special view, believing that none but themselves, and those who think with them, can be saved.

The Church does no such thing. She gives no new definition, but assures us that the only covenanted way of salvation lies in a belief in the one God in Trinity, as revealed to us in the Baptismal formula, and in the great doctrine of the Incarnation of the Son of God. For in these Christianity and all the blessings of the Christian Covenant do most assuredly rest.

The Bible and the Church have equally nothing to fear from open discussion and historical research; and this remark is particularly true as to the Athanasian Creed, which some years back was vigorously attacked both in Convocation and by outsiders. At that time I had the honor of presiding at a great gathering in St. James's Hall in defence of the Creed, and the attack was rolled back and silenced for a time mainly by two great facts which were brought to the front during those discussions.

First, there was the testimony of active missionaries, fresh from the conflict with heathendom in India and the East, that they have found this Creed most useful in dealing with the metaphysical objections of those Eastern people—showing them that those very speculations which they were inclined to indulge in had all been advanced by great men of the early ages of the Church, and had been carefully worked out and answered by the Church long ago.

And the second great fact was an historical one—that the more frequent repetition of this Creed, (which had been looked upon as a device of the Puseyites), had been specially ordered by Archbishop Crammer for the purpose of counteracting the revival of old heresies which at that time were threatening, under new names, to overwhelm our national Christianity.

It is much to be hoped that all those who really care for Christian unity (among whom I would willingly accept the writer of this article in the *Christian World*) will be more careful to master the true facts of history before they bring accusations against the undivided Church, or indeed against any of those bodies who, though divided, claim to be essential parts of the Body of Christ. Such accusations cannot tend to peace. Many heartburnings and much unintentional irreverence would be surely saved by a more careful and considerate handling of such subjects.

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