

PATRIOTISM AND PIETY

(Rev. John J. Cole in New World.) "Patriotism and Piety" is a theme as lofty as the love of God and as wide as the wants of man...

CIVILIZATION FROM GOD.

A closer observation of our own country reveals the intimate relationship between patriotism and piety. The very truths of which our country is a symbol—liberty, equality and fraternity—are heritage of revealed religion...

CHURCH AND STATE.

Patriotism and piety, or church and state, are of necessity mutual allies. The Church needs the protection of the state, and the state needs the grace and gospel of the Church for its progress...

A fearful billow of materialism, is engulfing our fair country like the noise of many waters, and lay readers who have learned the futility of all other agencies, are openly turning to the Church, whose

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system of education is the only wise preparation for right living on this side as well as the other side of the grave. With unimpaired boldness, divorce is stalking through the land devouring daily the sacredness of the home and the purity of womanhood, reducing to the baseness of a bargain the hallowed sacrament of marriage with which is bound up our peace and progress for time and eternity...

CAESAR AND GOD.

The twofold obligation of patriotism and piety has been nowhere better expressed than by Christ Himself in that famous interview, with the politicians of his day—"Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." In Christ's day, Israel was a subject of the Roman Empire, a bondage to which her many sins and her utter indifference to the prophetic warnings of Jeremiah and Isaiah had reduced her. Christ found the Jewish nation torn by two factions. The Pharisees maintained that to pay a tribute to a foreigner and a heathen was not only base and slavish, but forbidden by their God, who in the mouth of Moses and declared: "Thou mayest not make a man of another nation king." The Herodians, on the contrary, being the political bosses through whom Rome governed Judea, encouraged the tribute. These two parties were mutual enemies, regarding each other as traitors, the one to religion and Israel, the other to Caesar and Rome. But, like venal politicians for a moment, they forgot their ancient quarrel and united their cunning to destroy the influence of Christ. Who had vigorously denounced their hypocrisy and corruption, and whom they alike hated and feared. "Master," said they to him with a patronizing air, "is it lawful to pay tribute to Caesar?" If He said no, the Herodians were ready to drag him before Pilate as a traitor to the Roman emperor; if yes, the Pharisees would have derided His claim as king and Messiah, and denounced Him as an enemy to God's law, a false prophet, and a traitor to His country. But the wisdom of Christ overcame their malice. "Show me the tribute," said He, and asking "whose image is this?" and receiving "the answer, "Caesar's," He gave "that clever decision, as if He said: "This image upon your coin is proof that you are Caesar's subjects, therefore let not your pretended zeal for Israel be a pretext to neglect your ruler and his laws; render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; nor let your zeal for Caesar be a pretext to neglect God, for as Caesar's im-

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MODERN PHARISEES AND HERODIANS.

The Pharisees are not without their modern counterparts. Here is a man who withholds all interest and activity from civil affairs lest their contagion endanger his faith and morals. Here is a woman who is lavish of time at church and devotions to the neglect of her home duties. Now, Caesar is a symbol of all our worldly duties, such as politics, family and business. Our tribute to these, Christ commands in the same breath with our tribute to God. We are not excused from the former because of the latter. Therefore, when you find a man with pretensions to faith, who dodges his taxes, is unkind to his kindred, unjust to his employer or employee, or idle or lazy in his work, that man's religion is vain. Faith without good works is dead, and neither faith nor prayer can excuse us from our duties to our fellows. "If anyone have not care of his own, and especially to those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." But more fatal than the error which supposes that zeal for God will justify neglect of our worldly duties, is that other delusion which fancies that by being industrious, sober and honest, we may be excused from faith and worship. "May we neglect God because we remember Caesar? Will a parent excuse disobedience in a son because he is courteous to others? Is not his indifference to those who have the strongest claim to his love, only aggravated by his courtesy towards others? Many are they who boast of generous hearts and willing hands in their country's cause, but have little or no love for the Parent and Benefactor of all. Here is a Catholic who regards the statutes of the state as grave precepts, but the laws of the church as pious counsels. Another is ready to shed his blood in his country's defense, but will not lift his voice when his church is insulted or reviled. Another will proudly march in public parade draped in the stars and stripes, but would blush if seen signing himself with the sign of the cross. The number of such Herodians, more zealous for Caesar than God, is legion.

THE COIN OF TRIBUTE.

Christ could not have used a better symbol of His meaning than a piece of money, for money in the use men make of it is the test of character. How beautiful a coin fresh from the mint! How finely cut its inscription! How finely relieved the image of the monarch! As I hold it in my hands I can conjure up the haunts of trade, the homes of luxury, the idle bank of the miser into which it will find its way. As I drop it upon the counter I can hear in its echo that other ring with which it may be flung down in the service of extravagance or reckless speculation, or guilty and shameless indulgence, or it may be the joyous ring with which it will fall in some home of poverty and sickness or of some school founded or church built or some widow relieved in the name of Charity. Likewise the use to which we put God's image, our immortal souls, which are the coin of heaven shall determine the worth of our character, and our career in time and eternity. Be zealous to render tribute to Caesar. Serve well our country, family and business, but if you end there you have done only half your duty, and when the world you served so faithfully will be slipping from you as you pass behind the curtains of death, the lament of Wolsley will rush to your lips. Be honest and upright, rendering to every man his lawful due, but forget not that you yourself are the property of Him who created you in His image and redeemed you in His blood. Be a citizen of this republic, yielding to none in loyalty to the fatherland, but be also a citizen of that other and more permanent republic of the saints, that "city, not made with hands," whose builder and maker is God, "where your treasures will be safe," where neither rust nor moth doth consume, and where "thieves do not break through nor steal."

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