

Any citizenship, however cunningly built upon its material and intellectual side, must topple over and go to pieces if it refuse to recognize the image of God in the soul, and to obey the law of education which God has rooted in that image and clothed with a supreme sovereignty over the life of the flesh and the life of the intellect.

VISIBLE UNITY.

With hearty thanks to Almighty God, your bishops recognize an increasing desire among Christian people for that unity for which our Lord prayed on the night before His crucifixion, and which He declared to be the visible evidence before men of the truth of His Gospel.

For this unity the Church has never ceased to labor and to pray, and now, especially, she is called upon to stand with open arms and earnest pleading, ready to yield to the utmost in any matter of human ordering or any choice of human will, so that she may join heart to heart with all who desire to stand upon the unchanging basis, without which no external unity is possible, and with which, amid great diversities, unity is founded as on a rock—that is, the unchangeable faith as expressed in the Creed of Nicea, the two Divine Sacraments, the open Bible, and that Apostolic order which is the witness and keeper of these to the end of time.

These things are the deposit committed to the Church of God, not for her own sake, but for the sake of all men. For all men she holds them in trust, and in these latter days pleads anew in deep love and all humanity that all who name themselves with the name of Christ would draw near and see, and with one mouth pray for that Apostolic unity and peace which is found alone in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and rests secure upon the foundation of Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner-stone.

RELIGIOUS DOUBTS AND CLASS STRIFE.

And yet your bishops feel keenly that the differences which separate Christian folk are not the things which lie nigh the heart of the people. Thousands are asking in doubt—some of them in despair—Is there any revelation? Is there any guide? Is there a God? We fear that much of the strife which has arrayed class against class is the result of the teaching of misguided men, that the Bible is a myth, God a name, and religion a superstition; and feeling a profound sympathy for these men of toil who have filled our cities with creations of beauty, we know that they cannot afford to give up the Gospel of the Son of God. Their wildest dream of brotherhood has never compassed anything so surpassingly beautiful as that, by the appointment of God Himself, the poorest laborer may become "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." This brotherhood gives to the poorest man the inalienable right to appeal from the injustice of man to that God the Father who always hears the cry of His suffering children. It tells the rich man that the very condition of his fellowship with Jesus Christ is that he shall become the poor man's brother. The Gospel has not one law for capital and another law for labor. The truest political economy sustains the noble maxim of St. Paul, that "No man liveth unto himself." The voice of our Divine Master speaks through all the centuries, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness: that when ye fall, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Our time, our talents, our wealth, are a sacred trust, not to be used in idle luxury, in wanton waste, or selfish indulgence, but used by us as stewards who must give an account to God. The problem which perplexes the wisest is solved by the Divine law, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." These are not days to preach platitudes about doctrine, or to philosophize about religion. The Church must, in

the spirit of Christ, be the mediator to reunite these sundered bonds. The rights of labor are primary rights, with which neither the tyranny of mobs nor the oppressions of capital may interfere. The rights of capital are not less sacred, to enjoy the reward of honest labor and wise forethought, and use it for the benefit of others. Every form of misfortune has, by virtue of the Incarnation, a claim to the help of its prosperous brother. We cannot know how far-reaching is that awful truth until that day when our Lord shall say to each one of us, "Inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these My brethren, ye did it unto Me."

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CLERGY.

Brethren of the clergy, an awful responsibility rests upon us. Our office is an offence to men and an insult to God if we forget that the very terms of our commission are to represent Jesus Christ. The burdens which rest heavily on the people are not the gains which have repaid business ventures, but the vice, the crime, which follows in the train of sin, and which costs this nation more than all its schools, charities and churches. Sin, and the evil which flows from it, can be cured only by the Gospel of the Son of God. For a time bayonets and police may protect our property and guard our homes. But no nation has ever survived the loss of religion. Whenever the tie that binds man to God is broken, all other ties are snapped asunder. Take from men all sense of accountability to an unseen power, all obligation to an eternal and unchangeable standard of right, limit men's horizon by the grave, admit no tie between man and man but selfishness, and then might will be right, and the armed force, which alone can protect the inalienable rights of the freeman, shall itself be constant menace to his liberty. Your bishops are devoutly grateful for all which loving hearts are doing to bind up these wounds and heal this strife. We affectionately urge those over whom the Lord has made us shepherds to give personal service, personal efforts, to stay this flood of infidelity which is sweeping over our land. We cannot silence these gainsayers by arguments about religion. They have scoffed, and will scoff, against Christ and His Church. But the Christ who dwells in your hearts, the Christ who speaks through and works with you, none can gainsay or deny.

MISSIONARY WORK.

We rejoice, beloved in the Lord, that during the session of our General Convention now closing, so much time has been given to the consideration of the subject of missions, for beyond a controversy this is the great work laid upon the Church by her Lord, and therefore this is the subject of paramount importance to be considered by her leaders in council. You will learn from this our epistle, as from other sources, the measure we have been led to adopt for the furtherance of our work at home and abroad. We have amended the constitution of our Missionary Society, we have provided for the appointment of a special commission for the conduct of our work among the colored people of our country; we believe that our machinery is well ordered, but, alas! what we need is not more, or more perfect, machinery, but fire, the moving power of an earnest spirit, which will give time and care and money to make success possible. Must we not in honesty confess that during the past triennium of our Church's life the action of this missionary spirit has not been so powerful or so constant, so regular or so vigorous, as to keep the wheels ever in motion, and to justify larger enterprise of missions? At the beginning of the current fiscal year of our society, its managers, our agents, men who have given long and faithful service in the conduct of our missionary affairs, found it necessary to reduce the scanty stipends of our devoted missionaries, because, taught by

experience, they feared their inability to pay them if continued at their former rate. True, the fear was groundless, true that in response to the earnest appeals of the Board of Managers the flagging interest of the Church was roused, and the contributions before the year ended showed no falling off, but an increase in the amount given, and, better still, in the number of parishes contributing. Yet the managers have acted as honest trustees were bound to act. They could not make appropriations of money which the Church had failed to put in their hands. And the result has been necessarily a contraction of our missionary work, and we cannot but fear positive suffering in the homes of many brave and self-denying men.

Men of Israel, help! Soldiers and servants of the Prince who has prevailed with God for our salvation, arouse to the consciousness of the crisis that is upon us, and do all that in you lies, that before this first quarter of our year shall have ended, the treasury shall receive such gifts that its custodians may be enabled again to provide for the support of missionaries who have been withdrawn from the field, and to restore to the good soldiers of Jesus Christ the part of their ration which necessity compelled to be taken away.

Among cheering evidences of interest in this great cause, we are happy to notice the effort made by zealous laymen to commemorate our centennial year by pledging the sum of one million dollars, by individual subscriptions of five dollars each. Such an addition to our missionary treasury would be productive of immense good at this time, and be a fitting thank-offering on the part of a Church so highly favored. We commend the Missionary Enrollment Fund to the general and hearty co-operation of our people.

Brethren of the clergy, suffer the special word of exhortation to you in this behalf. It is because our people know so little of the details of our missionary work that their interest in its progress is so slight, and in consequence their offerings so small. Labor, we beseech you, to reform this ignorance; regularly, at stated intervals, preach to your largest congregation of the battle and the soldiers; seek to place our missionary periodicals in every family; that so our people may come to realize that the missionaries are but the advance guard of the one great army to which we all belong. Then will their welfare and success be watched for and prayed for, and helped by hands that are willing, because hearts are aflame. Interest in missions can come only from knowledge of missions, and knowledge must come from the painstaking instruction of the pastor to his flock.

[The Pastoral then refers to the local question of work among the colored people of the States, and to the Mission in Liberia; and after referring in touching terms to the voids made by death since the last meeting of the Convention, concludes:—]

CONCLUSION.

We bid you farewell, dear brethren, with sincerest affection, and pronounce the benediction you crave with our whole hearts. Many of us, in the ordinary course of Divine Providence, will not meet each other again in future councils. May we part in undissembled love and good will, and with earnest purpose to give ourselves more fully to our Saviour's work. In our respective spheres of duty, may we look with an eye single to our great Exemplar, and when the Master of the house cometh and knocketh, be ready to open unto Him immediately.

Finally, brethren, we commend you to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to grant you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."