

It is in consequence of this power and authority committed to the Son of Man, and in virtue of His delegation of the functions of the ministry to His Apostles to the end of the world, that the Church possesses her vitality and power, and shall continue to do so till time shall be no more.

THE UNITED STATES CHURCH IN ITS MISSION CHARACTER.

THE Church of the United States has been accustomed to date its missionary life from the General Convention in 1835, when the Church was formally declared, in so many words, to be itself a missionary society; and when the Right Rev. Jackson Kemper was sent off to be the first missionary bishop for the undefined "North-west." The last Convention was marked, in the estimation of all, as having shown more than ever before, an extraordinary missionary zeal and prompt determination to meet the Church's missionary responsibilities in the manliest way. The Church became what it was declared to be forty five years before—a Missionary Society. The Bishop of Nebraska called for the division of all compound missionary jurisdictions, and a separate bishop for each distinct territory which was not already so provided. The House of Deputies made his plea their own. The bishops did not feel it safe to go forward quite so rapidly. But they did separate Montana from Utah, and the territory of Washington from that of Oregon. The Convention appointed three new bishops for these two new jurisdictions, as well as for that of New Mexico. Provision was also made for raising during the following three years, a large missionary bishop endowment fund, which would enable the Church in 1883, both to put four more new bishops into this field, and to provide permanently for the support of her whole Missionary Episcopate. And with this a most important step was made in the mode of supporting the missionary operations of the Church at large.

The mode by which the missionary resources of the Church have heretofore been obtained has been by a system of appeals to congregations and individuals. Missionary bishops and others have heretofore been obliged to leave their work and go round the Church, from congregation to congregation, wherever rectors would welcome them, tell their story, and get a collection; and also by making personal application to rich Churchmen. This necessity of Church begging has been felt, as at best, a hard necessity, and an unnecessary humiliation to lay upon the bishops and missionaries, and also to be losing its effectiveness, as all appeals to sentiment must in course of time. Many incumbents have endeavoured to take this duty on themselves to make these appeals and to do this begging for them; and the missionary committees have of late sought to educate the Church about her own missionary work, by the large publication and the extensive distribution of leaflets of information. But with all this, the missionary resources were both unreliable and inadequate.

Accordingly, a proposition was made by Bishop Neely, of Maine, that instead of this mode, the Church should hereafter rely upon the systematic offerings and contributions of her friends given regularly, on principle. A scheme was clearly and fully set forth before the whole Convention, sitting as a Board of Missions, by the bishop; it was adopted with substantial unanimity, and with great earnestness; and at once a subscription list was made out and sent down to the Church with an annual subscription of \$3,000 by the bishops themselves from

their own private resources. It is felt by the Church in the United States that there is in this movement a good promise of a new era in missionary efficiency; and the application of the true financial principles of the Church to one department of her needs, will, it is expected, make it more easy to apply it before long to all of them.

The principle has been partially tried in Canada; and its apparent want of success is probably due to the lack of a more extended and a more persevering effort for its general application.

CHURCH THOUGHTS BY A LAYMAN.

No. 31.

THE SECTS AND EASTER.

THE chasm between the Catholic Church and the Sects varies in breadth. Their borders at times run so close that the ground is indeed common, but the gap suddenly opens like a mountain gorge, defying any bridging by skill, or passage by foot of man. At no point is this rent wider than at the gulf which parts the Church at Easter from those who spurn to share the Disciples' delight who were glad when they saw their risen Lord.

The Catholic Church at this season realizes in the Easter Eucharist such a Communion of Saints as the sects seek after by expedients which temporality cloak their fragmentary disunion, expedients which although worldly-wise are a vain mockery of the Divine order. From East to West a thrill of sympathetic joy vibrates the Church. Every altar blossoms with floral beauty, every voice greets the Lord of Easter with loving salutations, from Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand the chorus "Alleluia, He is risen," rings up through the vault of heaven rejoicing the heart of Jesus with the welcome sign of the oneness which subsists amid all their diversities amongst those who realize in His Headship an eternal bond of union with Him and with each other, and who therefore rejoice in the memory of His Resurrection. To these the path of Easter-tide leads up to the Mount of Transfiguration where they behold their glorified Lord, and hold converse with those who in the Heavenly City recall the transport of the morn when they were bidden to seek Him elsewhere than in the tomb. The theory of the sects implies that Jesus and the disciples have forgotten that transcendent hour when He burst the bonds and triumphed over death and the grave.

The theory of the sects is that while it was well for the early Church to keep the lamp of Easter trimmed as a symbol of their bright remembrance of the Resurrection, now-a-days such fervour of personal devotion, interferes too much with nobler pursuits, with business occupations and the like, or that to recognize such a link with the past is unworthy of a Church newly made on modern principles. Whatever be the motive, the chief sects have cut themselves adrift from traditional observances so hallowed, so beautiful, so touching, so consoling, and are using these sacred hours for merest vanity, for money making, nay, even for ostentatious contempt of the season consecrated by Jesus and honoured in all time by His Church. Mark the result in the chief disdainer of Easter, the Presbyterian body. They scorn the memory of Calvary and care not to look where their Lord lay; but men must have memorial days, so these Christians who have no sacred ones make their annual Festival in honour of a libidinous poet. In this seems to us the hopelessness of re-united Christendom until He comes before Whom the

idols of sectarianism will fall. Doctrinally the points of contact between the Church and the sects are more numerous than the points of divergence, but the *spirit* of the Church and the *spirit* of the sects are irreconcilable.

The observance or nonobservance of Easter is not a question between Protestantism and Romanism, for no body of those who name the Name of Christ are more utterly anti-Romanist, none have suffered more as Protestants, than the Moravians, yet Easter morn with them is celebrated by an outburst of instrumental and vocal music which if attempted by us would raise a riot of fanaticism. The question has a much deeper significance, a far more impressive cautionary lesson, one which goes to the very root of every schism. If we trace up any given separatist society we shall find that it has taken hue, colour, shape, and life from some one individual.

However royal the gifts, or saintly the soul of the founder of a Christian society, his powers and piety were narrowed by his personal character. No man sums up in himself the varied forces of humanity. To no mere man has ever yet been given all the graces, all the capacities, all the desires, all the yearnings, all the sympathies, all the tastes, all the spiritual faculties which it is the function of the Church to implant, to develop, to fulfil, to satisfy, to cherish, to sanctify, to direct and consecrate to and for Christ.

The garden of Jesus is not a glazed conservatory; the violet of the wayside, the floral gem which blooms high under Alpine snow, the palm of the tropics and the cedars of Libanus are alike the objects of his husbandry, equally sunned by His smile, or watered by His showers of grace. The Catholic Church to be truly worthy so sublime a name must be able to point to souls nurtured as lowly as the hedge-row lily, as aspiring, as hardy, as the daisy which gleams on Alpine altitudes, as stately as the magnificent palms which need a tropical sun to bring out their beauty, as vast as the forest giants which clothe with majesty the hills of Lebanon or shade the valley of Yosemite. The Church of God is not bound within isothermal lines; the God of grace is the God of nature; infinite as are the forms of creative beauty, His divine touch shines on them all; so infinite too are the souls of His people, but the Cross stamps them all as His Whose Love is wider than nature, but not wider than human needs. To found a Church for mankind was a task which no man nor meif could accomplish, to do this work called God from His Throne. He Who established the Catholic Church was the only Catholic Man this universe has known. In Jesus was not alone the fulness of the Godhead, but the fulness of manhood. His nature had no idiosyncracies, no specialties, no defects here nor overflow there. Jesus was not merely a man, He was Humanity. For any man to found a Church equal to the needs of our race were a task as easy as to redeem mankind. He who gave redemption gave also Headship to the Church, for He alone had power.

Would that the Sects would reflect on the terrible dishonour they do to their Redeemer by assuming to do again one of the greatest of His works, the work of founding His Church and making it a fountain of living waters for all the souls of men. It is this parodying, mocking the Saviour which constitutes the deep guilt of schism. The men who build up the sectarian societies by their deeds testify that Jesus failed to build a church equal to their needs; a blasphemous thought, yet the thought is the foundation stone, the tap root of all the so-called modern churches.

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