

HONORING THE HOUSE OF GOD.

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IN an article published, not long ago, some thoughts were suggested on certain ideas dominant to the Episcopal Church, which we of Puritan faith may wisely emphasize in our usages. Space did not allow the mention of one which, in some respects, is more timely to our present need than the rest. It is that of the sacredness of the House of God.

Democracy is not friendly to reverence for places. Many of our Churches are in this respect more democratic than religious. Our revolt from pilgrimages and shrines and sacred relics has swung us over to the antipodes, in which we scarcely recognize anything material as more venerable than another thing. Science settles the question. Are they not all resolvable into imponderable gases? We are but just beginning to know what Church architecture is. In one thing we have not outlived the barbarian age. Some of us still prefer to see surmounting our church-spires a horrible satire on our faith in the form of a weathervane or a cockerel, rather than the golden cross—its only proper symbol.

What shall we say of the uses to which we often put our places of worship? In rural parishes, their doors are often open to town-meetings, and vagrant lecturers. In the vestibule of one church was once posted a notice humbly requesting that shells of peanuts and expectorations of tobacco should not be left on the carpeted floor. Not long ago a raffle for a sewing machine was held in the auditorium, and the conditions were announced from the pulpit. Church fairs around and on the sacramental table are too old a story to bear recital. It is a grief to reverent taste that the basements of our sacred edifices should be devoted to commercial uses. One instance I have known in which worshippers assembled on the Lord's Day through a darkened passage, flanked on either side by a grocery and a provision store. The atmosphere they breathed on a Sunday morning was redolent with cheese and raw beef.

The climax of this semi-barbarism was reached in a church in the city of Boston. It could not be excused on the score of the simplicity of rural taste. The pastor and some of his congregation were models of refinement and of Christian reverence. On a Sabbath morning in midsummer the audience were mysteriously seized, in the midst of the service of song, with a paroxysm of uncontrollable sneezing. First the children, then the choir, and at length nearly the whole assembly, the preacher included, broke out into that involuntary convulsion which a former president of Harvard College once protested that he had not perpetrated in the presence of another for seventeen years. It was as if they had regaled themselves with the *helonium autumnale*, popularly known as "sneezeweed." Did ever American savage or African Hottentot bring such an offering to his gods? When the premises were searched by the astounded sexton amidst the cachinnations of the boys, the cause of the ridiculous catastrophe was found to be a cargo of pepper, which, during the previous week, had been stored in the cellar. The enterprising trustees had rented the place to a wholesale grocer. They thus eked out the salary of the pastor and the wages of the sexton.

In a thriving city of Connecticut, then one of the dual capitals of the state, a benevolent tailor, I think he was, was applied to for a subscription to

the building of a church. He responded with great alacrity. He said that he would give the building lot himself. The countenances of the committee brightened. He went on to explain, saying that he was about to build a new store for his increasing business, and that he would build one story, and the church was "welcome to all above that upward to Heaven." The usage of the churches he was familiar with had not suggested to him a doubt that his benevolent offer would be gratefully accepted.

Are such uncivilized associations ever encountered in Episcopal churches? It has not been my misfortune to meet them there. If, on entering a New England village, your eye falls on a place of worship more comely than the rest in architecture, and free from unchurchly accompaniments, do you not know, without asking to what denomination of worshippers it belongs? Grant that Episcopal usage sometimes crowds its churchly reverence to an extreme; but is not that a safer extreme than ours? We would not imitate the scruple of Doctor Johnson, who lifted his hat when he passed a church in the street; but we would rather do it than to wear the hat from the pew to the vestibule. The educating influence of this sentiment on children of the Church is of untold value.

A COLD DAY FOR PARTY ZEALOTS.

THE two speakers at the Mission meeting recently held in Toronto, were the Bishop of Algoma and the Rev. W. S. Rainsford, of New York. Both these divines are usually identified intimately with that less exalted school of Churchmen, who in the Toronto diocese speak of their Church "with bated breath and whispered humbleness," not unmixed on the part of the extreme Wycliffian wing, with ill concealed contempt. In the few pulpits controlled by this party the word "Church" is never heard. Said a young clergyman to us, "I dare not use the word 'Church' in certain pulpits, for if I did, the doors of those Churches would be closed to me." It must then have been a painful shock to those who are ashamed of the Church, but proud of their party, to hear the Rev. Mr. Rainsford speak thus: "The Pharisees tried to make proselytes to their own little party, their little section, and they tried to make men repeat their shibboleths. This spirit was keeping back the Church in England, in the States and in Canada." In order to make this cruel stab at the party zealots inflict a deeper, wider wound, Mr. Rainsford twisted the knife in the throbbing flesh of his friends by saying, "The question for each one was, 'Am I true to Christ?' instead of asking themselves whether they were true to the lives upon which some little coterie of men acted." That was indeed holding the mirror up to nature and showing vice her own image, for in those two sentences Mr. Rainsford depicted with photographic accuracy of detail the entire policy, aims and notions of "the little coterie," "the little section," who "seek to make men repeat their shibboleths," and who with almost incredible audacity usurp the title evangelical with the intent to cloak thereby their designs in regard to the Church of England, which are revolutionary and destructive. Some years ago during the Chartist agitation in England three tailors living in Tooley Street, London, issued a proclamation commencing "We, the people of England," they were fully as much justified in using this bombastic language as the little coterie at Toronto is justified in speaking in the

name of the evangelical churchmen of Canada. The Church in Canada owes Mr. Rainsford its thanks for administering so heavy, yet so righteous a rebuke to these zealots, who have forbidden the use of the word "Church" in the pulpits, but who glory in their untruthful party name. Staggered as the party must have been at Mr. Rainsford, they must have gasped with helpless indignation to hear Dr. Sullivan tell them that "They should take a greater pride in their Church, as a larger degree of missionary spirit would spring up in the members of the Church of England if they had a stronger *esprit de corps*." "*Esprit de corps*!"—is it possible that the Bishop of Algoma used such dreadful language, and he indeed have bidden churchmen take greater pride in the Church? Alas! for "the little coterie" the good Bishop spake indeed like a bishop, and like a true man and a true churchman. We hope Dr. Sullivan has a change of overcoats, for he is sure to be be-spattered with mud from the party organ for this exhortation. But let him not fear, he has the overwhelming mass of Churchmen in Canada and elsewhere at his back when he bids us take greater pride in the Church! There is not a member of the Church of England in Canada, whose allegiance is worth a groat, who will not rejoice at Dr. Sullivan's wise and timely words. The good Bishop of Algoma has struck a mortal blow at "the little coterie," whose whole ambition is to make us ashamed of the Church, and whose whole efforts are directed by their organ, their College and their pulpits to the destruction of that *esprit de corps* which is the pride of the Church, its strength, its glory, by being its outward and visible manifestation of the indwelling of the Spirit of God by Whom all members of the Body, which is the Church, are knit into union and fellowship with the ever Blessed Trinity.

If Dr. Sullivan will undertake to lift the party zealots, "the little coterie" out of their narrow rut, and will inspire them with pride in the Church as a divine institution, if he will stir these people to the cultivation of a churchly *esprit de corps*, if he will teach them that Christ is our Example and not themselves, he will do a great work for His Master. May he have courage and grace for the task!

THE TORONTO UNION-MISSION MEETING.

THE Mission meeting at Toronto, in which all the Church Congregations of that city were invited to join, proved successful in point of numbers who attended. We doubt however, whether the bare fact of some 700 or 800 persons being present at this meeting really justifies the conclusion that it fulfilled its avowed purpose of uniting the city congregations. The meeting was held in St. James' school-room and the principal speaker was the Rev. W. S. Rainsford, now of New York, whose popularity with the St. James' congregation was and is very great. Had this meeting been merely parochial, the name of Mr. Rainsford would have proved attractive to as many persons as attend the "union" meeting. There are now over twenty Church congregations in Toronto. Suppose we allot, say, one half of the attendants at the union meeting to St. James' congregation, that would leave not more than 400 to be distributed over all the other parishes, giving each congregation about twenty persons as representatives at this joint meeting. We have reason to believe that this estimate is far too large for many of the congregations.