

The hope for the civilization and happiness of the earth bound up with the Bible.

With rising earnestness the Cambridge Professor of Philosophy makes this declaration:—

"It is for the student to determine whether any system of liberal education can be regarded as complete and generous which does not include thorough study of this great body of Hebrew and Christian literature." My own strong conviction is that the only hope for the civilization and the happiness of the generations that are to come in this English-speaking world depends on the continued reverent study of the English Bible. Especially is this true in regard to those few great doctrines, those underlying truths, so simply and briefly expressed, which I have ventured to call the philosophy of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. For, know it well, the only choice for us in this piping nineteenth century, lies between this old philosophy of the Hebrews and the philosophy of despair, the pessimism of Hartmann and Schopenhauer."

The Bible is an old book, but it is not an antiquated book; it is a book for him who would accustom himself to noble thoughts nobly expressed; a book for him also who would perfect himself in social science, and who would form an adequate idea of the enduring causes of national character; a book for every man who, in the recognition of God, "ruling the world in righteousness," can say himself and those around him from the "pitiable cry which declares existence to be a burden and a wrong, and bids us eat, drink and rot." This book "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

A CHURCHMAN'S POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY.

It is not without feeling the pressure of the importance of the subject that we draw the attention of our readers to it at this time. To say that the present is a critical hour is only to say what may be repeated every hour, for human affairs within the spheres of political and religious life, as truly as within those of science and speculative philosophy, have attained additional impressiveness from the rapidity of movement which is so characteristic of the age. At such a time, watchfulness and prudence are especially needed. In days of quiet and slow progress, when men are calm and cool, and when opportunity is given for a careful and patient consideration of all surrounding circumstances, there may be the less need for the quivering sensitiveness that is needed in days of rapid transformation. In this age of inventive skill and bold daring, when the mind is active, and facilities for the utmost freedom of individual enterprise are plentiful, it is most needful to guard all interests, civil and religious, with great care, and to act with the utmost caution, and with painstaking fidelity to great principles. With these views in our mind, we desire to awaken the attention of our readers to the duty imposed on all Christian people of faithfully bearing and discharging their political responsibilities.

A strange teaching has perverted the injunction of Holy Scripture which teaches us to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." It would be a sore loss to the nations if Christian men did not discriminate between that which is not directly allied

with Christianity, and that which stands in direct antagonism to it. That the governing powers of States have too often been unfriendly to the Church of Christ, even when the Church was wise enough to know her own sphere and to keep within it, is but plain matter of history. But it is false reasoning to conclude that the powers of this world are ever to be far removed from sympathy with the Church, or continue in undying antagonism to it. Whatever may be the attitude of these powers in other lands, in our own land at the present day no such antipathy prevails. Under the worst circumstances, the citizen must not be lost in the Christian, for no teaching better fits for citizenship than Christian teaching; and the Christian is the highest type of citizen. Every citizen has duties from which religious profession cannot absolve him. Nay, a true interpretation of our holy religion would bind its disciples by indissoluble bonds to the faithful discharge of the duties of every relation of life, and to this as one of the chief. Nor does a mere observance of law prescribe the limits of obligation. There are duties that are not formulated as commands, and the penalty of whose neglect is not prescribed. Prominent amongst these are the duties arising from the relation which each man sustains to the nation in which he dwells. We refer more particularly to the duty of each using his measure of influence in the sphere of national politics. Indolence, cowardice or selfish indifference may lead a man to withdraw himself from these troublesome and perplexing matters. Some may refuse to participate in political affairs from fear of suffering diversion from more religious and spiritual matters, but it is not the highest style of religious life that seeks to screen itself from the dangers to which duty may expose it. The noblest kind of religious life is that which can maintain itself amidst the distractions and dangers of duteous toil. An autocratic government is held in abhorrence in our free land, where political rights have been hardly won, and are now freely and widely enjoyed. But political rights impose political responsibilities; and these cannot be ignored without dishonor to the individual and injury to the community. One effect of the withdrawal of Christian men from the toils and dangers of political life is the throwing heavier burdens on the shoulders of others. This is an unfairness. Nor is it less a wrong to leave in the hands of more thoughtless men the management of such grave duties. The nation needs its best men to be at the front in all national affairs. To Christianize the State, every Christian must be, according to his ability and opportunity, a statesman. Every man should, at the least, make himself familiar with the great questions that agitate the public mind; he should seek to form a just judgment upon them; and to throw his measure of influence into the scale in favor of wise and just measures. Never was the voice of the people more potent than to-day; never, therefore, was it more needful than now that that voice should speak the words of wisdom and judgment. Calm reflection on great national questions will guard men from the contagion of undue excitement or the impulse of the passion of crowds.

To use political rights under the guidance of religious principles, and not to ignore them on the pretense of guarding religious sensibility; to study political questions in the light of the same principles, not merely to be able to pronounce a right judgment upon them, but also with a view to right action; to exert one's individual influence calmly, and under the control of high principles in every way which is lawful and right; to bear a measure of the burden as well as to rejoice in the fruit of other men's labors, constitute at once the duty and the high prerogative of every man who professes and calls himself a Christian. Whatever may be the external relations of the Church and the State, it is the bounden duty of every faithful Churchman to aid in the moral and intellectual, the social and economical welfare of that State to which his very Churchmanship binds him with strong, enduring and sacred bonds.

VALUE OF THE CHRISTIAN YEAR.

Every departure from the system of the Church is a loss to individual character, and a weakening of belief and worship; it is the sure precursor of individualism, and, it may be, of heresy. Our safety—the safety of priest and people—is *living and working in the life and way of the Church.*

These pregnant words are taken from an address recently delivered by a Canadian prelate, and they sufficiently indicate the value to us of our Church's method of teaching.

1. The Church's method is well adapted for the formation of individual character.

2. It enables us to traverse every year the whole ground of theological belief and worship.

3. It is invaluable in preserving to us, not only truths in the best "form of sound words," but also Christian truth is a perfect whole with the relation of all its parts in their exact proportion.

It is the weakness of Dissent that its method favors what is called above "individualism." That is, men establish reputations for themselves by their personal gifts, their peculiar tenets, or their habits of thought. One minister is adored because he preaches so often on this or that theme with so marked ability; another because he has this or that trait of character which commends him to his "audience." The Dissenter wants a sermon to his taste, and will "take his money" where he can get it. May God in his mercy avert from the Church this degradation of the Divine office of preaching. A teaching Church must have faithful preachers—men who are not afraid to declare the whole counsel of God; to follow in their plain expositions of the Word the circlings of the Christian year, giving prominence to that which the Church of God in all ages has testified to as of supreme importance; the Incarnation, with its clear and manifest teachings on the Divinity of the Son of God; the Atonement, with all its lessons of comfort, strength, and grace; the Resurrection and Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the descent of the Holy Spirit; connecting with these great facts of the Creed all that which is a logical and inevitable consequence, the unchangeable character of human responsibility, the assured day and universality of judgment, the certainty of everlasting reward and of eternal punishment. The value of the Church's system is that her liturgic worship, her chosen collects, her appointed lessons from Holy Scripture, her Eucharistic readings of Epistle and Gospels; all overshadowed and consecrated by her reverent spirit, will if conscientiously adhered to, lead the preacher into a right spirit of exposition.—*Family Churchman.*