

Bishop Beveridge, "Doctor, Doctor, charity is above rubrics?" It cannot be a matter of supreme importance or one affecting the efficacy of the blessed Sacrament, whether or not the celebrant adopts the eastward position; whether or not he mixes a little water with the wine; whether or not the candles on the Holy Table be lighted. These things may be symbolical of certain truths; they may be useful in impressing those truths on the minds of worshippers; but they cannot be regarded as essential. The principle which lies beneath them may be dear to the hearts of those concerned; but it is impossible to suppose that it is a principle one hundredth part so important as the keeping of that new and eleventh commandment which is of the very essence of Christianity.

There ever have been, and we suppose there always will be, differences of opinion and of practise in the Christian Church. At no time has one dead level of uniformity prevailed. And it is in no sense desirable that it ever should. 'Unbroken uniformity,' it has been said, 'may be the boast of a deadening Buddhism, a withered Confucianism, a mechanical Islam; it cannot exist in a free and living Christianity.' And to attempt to force upon the Church one general system of uniformity would be of all follies the most grievous. It would only succeed in finally destroying the little Christian unity that remains. And it is unity that we want, and not uniformity. 'See how these Christians love one another,' so was it said of the early believers. It is a remark, alas! not likely to be made by anybody now. Shall we never learn to regard this question of postures and positions, and (what Dean Stanley called) 'clergyman's clothes,' with that manly and robust common sense which made Martin Luther exclaim, when it was complained to him that a certain brother persisted in wearing a cassock, 'Cassock!' cried Luther; let him wear nine cassocks if they do him any good? What the Church of England in these days stands specially in need of is a little more Christian toleration and a little more sanctified common sense. We should not then see the lamentable spectacle of a civil war in the Church of God. Is it too late, even now, for both parties to take to heart the wise and tender words with which Richard Baxter once endeavoured to allay the passions of controversy? 'While we wrangle here in the dark,' he said, 'we are passing to that world which will decide all our controversies, and the safest passage thither is by peaceable holiness.'—JOHN VAUGHAN in *Church Bells*.

THE BISHOP OF RIPON ON MEN OF LIGHT AND LEADING.

The Bishop of Ripon, preached lately a remarkable sermon on love as the law of moral gravitation. His text was Rom. xiii. 10. He said that there were two classes of great men—the first those who helped humanity by clearing away mistaken ideas (those confused notions which gather round the thoughts of men) might be called "men of light"; while in the second class were those who awayed the wills and affections of men, who, though not original thinkers, were possessed of that magnetic influence which made them "men of leading." The first spoke to the understanding, the second to the heart. He who was gifted with this double power was conspicuous indeed. Our Lord coming to the world as a man of light would command our allegiance, gratitude, and affection irrespective of the leadership. He exercises amongst men. It would be wise, said the preacher, for us to view His relation to us in the twofold aspect. We are apt to forget, in considering His hold over our hearts, what He has done for the world of thought. Men of light simplified ideas and reduced them to order. Before the coming of Jesus Christ any disturbance of natural phenomena was

ascribed by the ancients to some directing power—hence the multiplicity of gods. But knowledge grew. Isaac Newton by his great discovery of the law of gravitation, Harvey by his theory of circulation of the blood, and Columbus by proving the world to be a sphere—all combined to simplify and make clear what before was confused and dark. So in the world of ethics, Jesus Christ revealed to us the ruling principle. In earlier ages, men made virtues of either talents or accidental advantages, as the Jews made a virtue of their descent from Abraham, not comprehending what Christ put before them of a spiritual worship. Christ taught us the vastness of the moral world; the individual life making up the national, the national the universal. Wherever in either obedience to the law of righteousness engendered corruption, there could be found the eagles of retribution gathered together. We were told that conduct was three parts of life, but what was the fourth? Three parts of the tree were above the soil, but the vital part, the root, was below and out of sight; so the law of conduct must spring from the heart, which must obey the law of righteousness, or retribution would follow. As Newton discovered a law which vitally affected all nature, so Jesus Christ gave us one law, "Thou shalt love," which might be called the law of moral gravitation. As the falling tear or moving stone proved the natural law, so every commandment in the second table of the Decalogue was the application of the spiritual law. This law of love was not original. The Epicureans were taught love of self, the Stoics love of the brotherhood, the Platonists love of the Divinity. These only gave the individual application of a universal law. Jesus Christ revealed the moving force which lay behind all. He told us that we and all created worlds existed in the ether of an all-embracing love—in unison with our own was a mighty pulse of affection; He showed us that love was the vital force of the universe in which we dwell, for "God is love." If deficient in love, we were in antagonism to the force which governs all creation. Life was not all theory, nor was it all emotion. Systems based on theory alone failed. The thinker very often obtained but a barren victory; the man with magnetic force and enthusiasm reaped the fruits of his work. Theories must be incarnated in order to be successful. Free trade was embodied by the energy of Cobden; there would have been no Crusades without a Peter the Hermit. Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world," but at the same time, "I am the Way," and "Come unto Me." He was a personality inviting us to love Him, and persuading us thereto by His love to us. His love for every human being was the secret of His revelation. He loves us, though knowing all our faults, and love is the universal law laid down by Him, the Light and Leader of the souls of men.—*The Church Review*.

"A THOUGHT AND A PRAYER FOR EVERY DAY IN LENT." [E. P. DUTTON & Co., N. Y.]

THIRD WEDNESDAY.—Holy exercises are not to draw us away from the duties of life's calling—not to lead us to perform those duties less well. Regular attendance at Church and at the Holy Table—frequent reading of God's Word—solemn private prayer—self-examination and meditation—all these are means of grace high, faithfully used, will enable us to do better work in the world. It is certain that the life of good deeds can only be sustained by communion with God.—*O God, give me Christian energy*—

THIRD THURSDAY.—How many there are who seem to live in a perpetual twilight, and to be quite satisfied that it should be so—all their belief is hazy and misty—there is no

clearness about it—there is not that definite perception of truth which serves to make religion a personal thing—there is no taking home to themselves the precious promises of God!—How is it with us?—*Lead, kindly Light—in Thy light shall I see light!*

THIRD FRIDAY.—Life in the Christian is a continual coming to Christ—it must be so. Whether coming for the first time, or coming, as we have often come before, seeking again and again more earnestly to come, we come by loving. With thanksgiving and praise—with prayer and holy effort let us faint not, but persevere—our course is onward and upward—Christ-ward—it is a journey of love.—*O make me love Thee more and more!*

THIRD SATURDAY.—Our Lord Jesus Christ said to His disciples not merely "Love one another," but added "as I have loved you." The old law of love which dated from the beginning was thus made a new commandment—renewed in Him. We see, then, looking to Jesus, what our love should be like. To see love in the life is far better than having only a description of it. *Teach me, Lord Jesus, Thy self sacrificing love.*

THIRD SUNDAY.—God can work in any way He pleases, but ordinarily He bestows His gifts through the means of grace; so that if we do not use the means, we have no right to suppose that He will give us His grace. Though Christ may communicate Himself to the individual soul by other means, the appointed means cannot be lightly esteemed by those who would seek their soul's welfare.—*Grant, O Saviour of men, that I may be led to use all the helps Thou hast given to Thy Church.*

THIRD MONDAY.—There is a Kingdom which cannot be moved. However unsettled, tottering, and changeable, things around us may seem, God is above all, ruling according to His wise providence—the King of a mighty and enduring Kingdom. It is not for us to be too firmly rooted here. Have faith in God!—let us not fear nor be dismayed. Oh, that we may stand in our lot at the end of the days!—*Grant me grace, O God, to persevere.*

THIRD TUESDAY.—Kindness to men in their temporal necessities is the handmaid of Christianity. Practical sympathy most can appreciate—it appeals to men. There are different ways of showing kindness in the world—the manifestations of the sweetness of Christianity will differ according to circumstances; all may advance Christianity by, in some way, commending it to the favorable notice of others.—*Lord, make me a useful missionary in my home, and round about my home.*

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