

thus in the language of the Royalist poet:
"They proved the doctrine orthodox
By apostolic blow and knocks."

There is truth even in this bitter sarcasm. Cromwell and his soldiers carried all before them. Then came the reign of the Saints, the new kingdom of God. It is easy to be wise two hundred years after the event; we can see that these men were inspired by the spirit of the Old Testament rather than that of the New; that they thought more about Samuel heaving Agag in pieces than of Christ praying for his enemies. We can see that it was much easier to destroy an old kingdom than to build a new one, and corruption and confusion soon spread among the Saints. The men who rose to fight for 'righteousness' sake ended by setting up a kingdom of their own. But after all they were noble men. These men, when their leader had gone, went quietly back to their ordinary life of godly service, and Milton, one of the most faithful, passed into darkness to sing his immortal song and "justify the ways of God to men." Their influence lives to-day. Being dead they speak, and their silence is full of spiritual power. Once more we come to the conclusion that Christ's kingdom is not of this world, that military power may produce hypocrites, but some other power must create the Saints. The kingdom of God cannot not with "the holy test of pike and gun." It is an unseen kingdom in which love is the ruling force.

11. Turning to another aspect of the subject we may ask: Does the "kingdom of God" mean the visible Church of Christ? There are some who say that this is at any rate one meaning of this phrase, and there are some churches which claim to be the kingdom; so we must consider the statement and compare it with the Saviour's teaching. The Pharisees of our Lord's day held a similar opinion. Go to one of these men who wear broad phylacteries and are learned in the law of Moses and the tradition of the elders, and say to him: The kingdom of Alexander, the kingdom of Caesar, the kingdom of Herod. I know that these words have meant and do mean, but tell me if you can the deep meaning that lies in the words "the kingdom of God." His reply is ready and doubtless it is plausible. He says that in an ordinary sense the people of Israel constitute the kingdom of God, but that even within the holy kingdom the common people who do not know the law are accursed; therefore there is a kingdom within a kingdom and that in the truest sense the men who give up their lives to the study of the law and the performance of religious ceremonies are the members of the inner kingdom. I think this is a fair statement of their case, and yet it is not clear that such teachers glorify the letter at the expense of the spirit. It was the established church of which these men formed a part that rejected the Christ and crucified Him. They boasted in the exclusive possession of the kingdom and yet they were so blind that they could not recognize the true king. No doubt many of these men were devout, sincere worshippers of the living God, but that was not sufficient to make their party the only kingdom of the Most High. But some may say, this is evading the question; it is too late to talk about the Jewish church, and surely the visible Church of Christ is a divine kingdom on earth. To this the reply is not difficult, for the spiritual principles which were revealed in our Lord's conflict with Judaism are the same in all ages. It is still true that the heavenly kingdom is in the spirit and not in the machinery of the church; its essence is life, not organization. When we pray, "Thy kingdom come," we do not speak of that which can be made the watchword of a religious party or the special property of a sect. The kingdom of God is free as the air, pure as the light

and broad as the heavens. I do not think there is anything in the New Testament to warrant the belief that the visible church contains and circumscribes the kingdom of God on earth. I cannot imagine the early disciples saying in the tone which some now adopt "We are the kingdom of God," although they rejoiced that they had been translated into that kingdom through the redemption of Jesus Christ.

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If we were to say that the church is the kingdom of God then would arise another question, which church? Here is a stirring question, a question which can never be satisfactorily answered, a question that only brings heart-burnings, a question which does more to advance the kingdom of the devil than any other question upon which men are divided. "He that is not against you is for you," says our Master when the disciples wish to thunder out the anathema of excommunication. Therefore we must have no narrow definition, no small conception; the boundary lines of this realm make a tremendous sweep, taking in all that is honest, pure, lovely, and of good report. "They shall come from the east and the west and the north and the south and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God." There is no single community that can manifest the perfect truth, the full-orbed life, the ever radiant life of the Divine Kingdom.

Canon Wescott says: "The visible church is a type of the future reign of Christ, and the spiritual church is a type of the consummation of Christ's reign in heaven." In this very fair statement and in that word type we may find a clue to help us out of our difficulties. The Israelites of old were called and consecrated to a special service; they were a peculiar people set apart for a glorious mission in the world, but in the pride of bigotry and intolerance they began to think that God's kingdom was and must ever be confined to them, and when they were completely given over to this spirit they shut themselves out of the true spiritual kingdom. They were meant to be a type of what every nation ought to be, and notwithstanding their failure through them a glorious spiritual heritage has been given to the world. The lawgivers of Israel denouncing all uncleanness, the prophets making known the glory of righteousness, the poets echoing the melody of heaven, these are types of the highest national life; these spiritual forces we need to purify the society of to-day. So today wherever there is a band of men whose hearts God has touched, who are united in the name of Christ and rest their minds upon his truth and their hearts upon his life, there is a type imperfect but real of God's true kingdom. The community on earth with all its frailties may be a symbol of the everlasting kingdom. Christian churches have sometimes disgraced their name by manifesting an un-Christian spirit. They have sometimes obscured the heavenly light and hindered the free, healthful movements of the Divine Spirit. This has often sprung from the love of worldly power and from the desire to exalt the Church into a powerful, earthly corporation. The church must realize her spiritual nature if she would be "bright as the sun, fair as the moon and terrible as an army with banners."

When we say "Thy kingdom come" we do not simply ask that our church may be enlarged, though we trust that every increase of power which comes to us may be a means of bringing souls into the kingdom. Our petition is deeper in its meaning and larger in its scope. We pray that all visible things that are ruled by the invisible spirit, that our hearts may be cleansed from selfishness and we may see God, that truth may conquer even if it should sweep away our errors and prejudices,

that love may reign and place all bitter hatred under her feet, that God may be "all in all." Are we then prepared to offer this prayer in deep sincerity, being willing first of all to surrender our personal life to our crucified Lord?

OUR NORTH WEST MONDAY LETTER.

The anniversary services of Southlands Church were held on Sabbath, the 4th November. Rev. F. J. Hartley, Roland, conducted the services and lectured on Monday evening. The attendance was good and the pastor, Rev. R. B. Ledingham, was greatly cheered and encouraged. The Spiering anniversary was held on the 11th inst. Rev. Jos. Hogg, of Winnipeg, was the preacher for the day. On Wednesday the annual dinner and entertainment were to be given.

The induction of Rev. J. W. Little, B. D., late of Keewatin, to the pastoral charge of Elgin took place last Friday, when, under auspicious circumstances, the new pastorate began. The induction of the Rev. Chas. McKay, late of Belmont, to the Thornhill congregation, took place at Darlingford last week. May these be lasting and felicitous unions.

Rev. Dr. Wilson, of Augustin, goes to Morden for Sabbath, and Rev. Dr. Farquharson goes to take the anniversary services at Pilot Mound, his former place of abode. The conference held at the beginning of the Synod was fairly well attended to-night and Rev. Mr. Bennet gave a very interesting and instructive paper on Professor James' book, "Varieties of Christian Experience." After a resume of the work which he rightly took for granted that many had not read, he undertook a criticism of some of the positions maintained by Professor James. One particularly striking statement was, that the author cast sin behind his back altogether. Dr. Gilbert Wilson, in leading the discussion claimed that Mr. Bennet had not caught the author's meaning on this particular point. President Patrick presided. One thing may be said in regard to a conference of this nature that it shows us our own ignorance of the literature of the day, but after all it may be a pardonable stupidity, for when men such as Mr. Bennet and Dr. Wilson disagree as to what a man means, the rest of the country ministry may be quite content to wait. Professor James, however, evidently stimulates thought.

Barnabus MacMan.

TORONTO.

The new Reid avenue Presbyterian church, Norway, was formally opened on November 25th. Dedication services were held morning, afternoon and evening. Rev. Dr. W. G. Wallace taking the morning service, R. S. Gourlay the afternoon and Rev. Dr. Pidgeon in the evening.

The Presbyterian Church Extension Union of Toronto has bought for \$1,000 the three lots at the north west corner of Pope and Harecourt avenue. The lots have a frontage of 120 feet, and are assessed at \$480, and the taxes against them amount to \$821. The Union will use the land for a church building.

A successful concert was given in the Kew Beach Presbyterian Church by the choir of Annette street church, Toronto Junction, under the leadership of Wilbur Horner. A bright program was rendered, consisting of choruses by the choir, solos by Mr. Arnold (violin), W. Horner (vocal), Miss Borland, readings, and piano duets by Miss Edgar and Mr. Leslie Horner. The choir work was of exceptional merit, the attacks, phrasing and enunciation showing careful preparation. After the concert refreshments were tendered to the visitors by the Kew Beach ladies.