

of the Faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man.'

Look at the mystery of the Holy Trinity. The Faith given us by Christ and handed down in His Church, is that there are Three Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, who are yet but One God. Does it matter whether we believe this or not? Surely it does! The whole Work of God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, for our Salvation, rests upon their Divine nature. One grasp this, and the Faith will be the mainspring of our lives.

If we believe in God the Father, as our Father in Heaven, we shall seek to live as His children.

If we believe that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, who became man for us, that He might redeem us from sin and death and give us Eternal Life—we shall give our hearts in loving obedience to His commandments. If we believe that he is now present, feeding and strengthening us, in His Word and Sacraments, we shall be very earnest in seeking him there.

If we believe that He has given His Holy Spirit to dwell within us, to teach us, to guide us, to strengthen us, and to comfort us, we shall seek to know more of that Holy Spirit and His marvellous work.

We do not indeed fully understand now, God's nature and His dealings with us—nor does a child understand all about His earthly father—he simply believes. The life of faith is a life of growth, and the more firmly we believe in God the more shall we know Him, and the more faithfully shall we follow His guidance.

The Devil whispers that it doesn't matter—because he knows that indifference leads to ruin. He helps men to make plans of their own for salvation, because it flatters human pride—but the path of humility is the path of safety.

Let us seek to value, above all this world can offer, the Word and Sacraments which Christ has down in His Church. As little children, let us learn in all humility the mysteries of the Faith—and as men "contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints."

SECTISM—UNJUSTIFIABLE.

One of the most common arguments in justification of sectism is the success which has attended the various bodies of Christians who have adopted independent organizations, regardless of primitive or Apostolic precedent. Behold, they say, what a blessing has rested on our ministrations (irregular though you pronounce them to be?) What numbers have been gathered into the fold through our instrumentalities? Would the Head of the Church smile upon our ministries if they were as defective as you represent? This argument is more forcible in the mouth of the Roman Catholics than any other class of professing Christians, for they far outnumber the entire aggregate of all Protestant Christians; and they do use it freely, not because it is logical, but plausible and quite effectual with a certain class of thinkers who imagine that truth must always be with the majority. But no one in the least acquainted with the struggles which Truth has always had against numerical odds, will attach the slightest weight to the argument of numbers. The heathen may taunt the whole Christian world with the sad fact that the suffrages of mankind have always been in their favor, and that Christianity has never been proved to be a Divine Religion by the verdict of a majority of the human family, because they, the heathen, number between five and six hundred millions of the earth's population, while Christianity can count only between three and four hundred millions. Now while we cannot but

admit the fact of their premises, will we also acknowledge the truth of their conclusions? Will we not rather say, with the poet,—

"But numbers are no mark
That men will right be found;
A few were saved in Noah's ark
For many millions drowned."

Yet certain classes of Protestants do use this argument to prove that, in separating from the Church Catholic, their rapid numerical increase shows their act to have been approved of God: e.g. "We," say the Methodists, "outnumber the Church in this country five to one, although it had a century the start of us. Is not this evidence that the Divine blessing is with us rather than with you?" Let us briefly examine this argument, and see what weight ought to be attached to it.

To do evil that good may come is a principle alike abhorrent to Christianity and morality. Or when evil has been done, to suppose that it can ever cease to be evil because certain benefits may result from it, is a delusion of Satan. The underlying falsehood on which any system may be based will prove to be to it a rotten foundation in the end. Vice can never produce virtue although it may associate itself with virtue, and by means of it may accomplish some good; but all the good flows from the virtue, although vice may be the instrument. Schism is an evil condemned of God and denounced by His word (1 Cor. i. 10; xii. 25; yet schism may take hold of the gospel of Christ and preach it with zeal, and may dispense (though without authority) the sacraments, and the truth may take effect on the minds of multitudes, while schism remains as odious as ever. "Some preach the gospel of envy," says St. Paul; yet envy is no less odious because it has seized hold of the gospel to gratify its passion withal. An impostor may pray with such fervor and preach with such eloquence as to carry the multitudes with him, who have no doubt for the time being that he is a man of God, divinely commissioned to do good and bless the world by his faithful labors in the service of Christ. So sects often arise out of jealousies or rivalries or ambition or revenge. Some Diotrephes who loveth to have the pre-eminence, but cannot rule in the Church and will not be subject to his brethren, goes out from them taking with him their gospel, but repudiating their authority. If successful in gathering followers or inducing numbers to join the schism, it is claimed to be an evidence of Divine approbation. Can such an inference be legitimately drawn? Mohammedanism and Mormonism claim the benefit of the same kind of logic. The invariable consequences of schisms which are divisions, sometimes afford a curious illustration of the value of the argument from success. When in the course of a few generations, schism passing through various changes reaches a point which at the first it regarded as a denial of the faith, or from the highest toned orthodoxy degenerates into the lowest forms of Universalism, Unitarianism, or Rationalism, as in Geneva and Germany, and in its new role has larger increase than ever before, and begins to appropriate the argument of numbers in proof of the Divine favor, does not every one see that an argument so elastic can really establish nothing at all; that it proves too much to prove anything, inasmuch as it may demonstrate the very opposites of doctrine or polity to be true, and truth and error are by it so confounded or held in equipoise that the arithmetic of mere numbers is looked to, to turn the scale?

That numerical success can furnish no argument in proof of Divine favor is evident, sectarianism itself being judge. For as a sect is always a minority departing from a majority, in the very act of separating they repudiate the argument of numbers. The "Vox Populi, vox Dei" was against them and condemned them and condemned their schism. But they

headed it not. In process of time, perhaps, numbers come to their relief. They increase and multiply, they become the majority. Now the argument finds favor with them and is pressed into their service. Schism is sought to be justified by the very argument by which it was at first condemned.

If the numerous conversions which have often accompanied schisms, may be regarded as a justification of them, then it will be difficult to prove schism a sin at all, for there is perhaps not one among all that have ever taken place that has not had some ingatherings. But does schism ever stop to inquire whether those ingatherings could not have taken place in unity as well as in schism; whether all the good they claim to have accomplished could not have been done in the Church as well as out of it, or, to speak more in accordance with their theories, without making a new church for the express purpose, while all the evils of schism would also have been avoided? If the antagonisms and uncharitable discussions, the disintegrations and consequent debilitation of the moral power of Christianity, together with all the skepticism and free thinking, which sectarianism has engendered, be put into one account and the great successes they boast of into the other, and the balance be struck, will it not be against that cause which should be dear to all, the Cause of Christ? That Christianity as a power in the land has been sadly weakened by the multiplication of sects, no candid observer of events can deny. Every new schism is an argument against the witness which it bears for the truth, which, the world says, ought to be uniform to be believed, but in the same proportion that it becomes conflicting it becomes doubtful and incredulous, and leads to skepticism and infidelity. Wherefore, if the privileges of schism are to be so dearly bought, let every one forego the expensive luxury, and seek that unity, both organic and spiritual, for which the Saviour prayed, "that the world may believe that Thou has sent me."—Theoklesia.

SIX ESSENTIALS TO SUNDAY-SCHOOL WORK.

The following six elements are essential to a well conducted and prosperous Sunday-school. Omit any one of them and you weaken the rest, and hinder the usefulness of the school. Let it be the concern of every Sunday-school teacher to do the utmost in his or her power to secure the combined influence of those six elements essential to success:—

1. Parental authority exercised in sending children regularly, punctually and with lessons.
2. The rector actually, and not merely nominally, head of the school a reliable superintendent being his administrator.
3. A short and Churchly religious service with carefully selected hymns.
4. Teachers, mature, experienced, perceptive, adaptive, studious, spiritual; always on hand punctually at school time and frequently or occasionally at the children's homes, working and playing places.
5. Graded lessons, including: (a) Catechism, collects and other data of the Church year, with Scriptural whys and wherefores. (b) The Bible—"It rather than about it," its exegesis, and with special reference to Messianic relations.
6. Classes and associations of grown persons for Bible study.—The North East.

The beginning and the end of a religious life is

To love God with the heart,
To praise God with the lips,
To edify others with the example.

—St. Bonaventure.