

# Church Observer.

A Journal advocating the interests of the United Church of England and Ireland in the Dominion of Canada.

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## Poetry.

### THE BOY AND HIS BIBLE.

"Dear father," said a lovely boy,  
With sweet and pensive look,  
As rising from the nursery floor,  
He closed his favorite book,  
And snugly 'gainst his little breast  
With tiny hands the Bible pressed.

"Say, father, when my body dies,  
And sleeps within the tomb,  
And my freed spirit mounts the skies,  
To find with Jesus room,  
Shall I not there on that bright shore  
This sacred volume have once more?"

"My child," the father quick replies,  
"This book God's will declares;  
It points unto the glorious prize  
Which every victor bears;  
By love to God through Christ His Son,  
Our warfare is complete;

"And when the crown of life is given,  
Our warfare is complete;  
And every wish and thought in heaven  
Unbounded love will meet,  
And, like a swelling, mighty flood,  
Exulting rise in praise to God.

"Eternal ages will unfold,  
New beauties every hour,  
And our immortal eyes behold  
God's wisdom, might and power,  
E'er shining through the wondrous plan  
Redeeming love to fallen man."

All wrapt in solemn thought, a while,  
The little one did stand;  
Then, with a sweet and placid smile,  
He raised his soft white hand,  
And from his bosom gently took  
His precious treasure, God's own book.

Then hardly conscious of his voice,  
He said, and wiped a tear,  
"I'd love with angels to rejoice,  
My Jesus to adore;  
But can't I sometimes steal away,  
And read how David loved to pray?"

—Christian Alliance.

### PROTESTANTISM A FAILURE.

Extracts from Address by Bishop Cummins of Kentucky.

On Sunday evening 24th inst., the church of the Incarnation, New York, was filled with a large and interesting congregation.

Rev. Dr. Cummins, assistant Bishop of Kentucky, in defence of the principles of the Anglican Reformation, now imperilled in the Episcopal Church of England and the United States. The Right Rev. Dr. spoke as follows:—

It is a remark made by the latest and most brilliant historian of England, Mr. Froude, that the immediate present never appears wonderful or memorable to those living under its influences, however vast and portentous they may be. And he illustrates the remark by a reference to the men of the French Revolution who went about their work as though unconscious of the mighty drama in progress, insensible to the fact that those days were to be the *disruptants* forever in the annals of the race. But I think the remark is scarcely applicable to ourselves and to our own age. We whose heritage is this Reformed Church of Christ, feel in the depth of our souls that we are passing through a crisis, solemn, momentous, awful.

Three memorable attempts have been made within the last three hundred years to subvert the work of the Anglican Reformers. The first was in the sixteenth century; the second in the seventeenth; the third in the nineteenth. The first was an attempt by force, the second by fraud, the third by treachery. The first was a deadly assault from without to destroy the citadel, and put to death its defenders. The second was a plot to gain admission by sapping and mining. The third is a conspiracy on the part of a portion of the garrison itself to throw down the defences, and change the flag. It is the effort to corrupt the faith of the Reformation, to withdraw the protest of the Fathers of the Anglican Church against the false doctrine of anti-Reformation times, and to assimilate the doctrinal teachings of this church to that of un-reformed communions.

The great leaders of the movement were four—Newman, Pusey, Keble and Froude. But they had a teacher. Dr. Charles Lloyd, Regius Professor of Divinity, and afterwards Bishop of Oxford, who died in 1829, was perhaps the first man to inaugurate this dire work. He introduced the practice of giving private instruction to candidates for the ministry, and among his students were the four men I have just mentioned.

Thus the Oxford movement to turn back the tide of the Reformation was heralded in. It began by a distinct Anti-Reformation avowal. Step by step the work went on, by the publication of the "Tracts for the Times," for eight years, until almost every point won by the Reformers had been assailed or depreciated. At last the grand culmination was reached in Tract No. 90, a work of which I dare not trust myself to speak, so deep is my abhorrence of the dishonesty of it. That tract has lately been republished in this country and extensively circulated, to do its baneful work anew in another generation.

At last the church authorities in England were fairly aroused, and the teaching of this tract formally condemned. The result soon followed, which had been so long anticipated. The great leader, finding himself in a Reformed Church, but not of it, went to his own place. The number who followed the great leader had not been small. The seed sown so deeply had not died out. It was only ripening silently and surely. And we have awakened from our dream of security to find ourselves compelled to contend for the very life of our Reformed church.

I need not stop to produce evidences of the growth of this movement in the developments about us in England and in this country. The simple majestic service of our church in many places has been transformed into a ritual

which the fathers Reformation would not recognize as twice of their deepest love. Altars erected super altars, and burning candles, and vestments, and floating clouds arise; the communion service set in a Roman work; emblematic services at the but the dead, with ceremonies that actual pass those of Rome; these are but a part of false doctrine which has succeeded to sac corrupting the faith of a reformed communion.

The confessionals last development. That private confess already established is not the point in question. It is admitted, and the practice almost of all Reformed churches, may be maintained as a preparation for the use of penitential confessors. Of all the errors of the Chief Rome that of auricular confession is most hateful to our people. The priest leads to the establishment of another sin in every household, by every heart, in place of the husband and father. The bow before me is not a volume of dogmatics—it is far more mighty—a manual for young, a catechism to be learned by youth both sexes under fourteen years of age, to prepare them for confirmation. Now, is hear the teaching of this manual:

Q.—When do we receive forgiveness of sins?

A.—In holy baptism.

Q.—How do we receive forgiveness for sin after baptism?

A.—By absolution at the holy communion.

How would St. Paul have answered that last question? or Ignatius of Jerusalem? or Hooker?

Q.—Where will we find God's Holy will and commandments? A.—In the Living Church, in the written word, and in the enlightened conscience.

"Holy Scriptures," as Article sixth, "containeth all things necessary to salvation."

I have not attempted to expose all that this little book contains of teaching utterly subversive of the doctrinal teachings of the Reformation. It is enough to say that had these teachings been held in the reign of Edward VI. there could have been no Reformation. If there be indeed such a thing as the failure of Protestantism, it seems to me that this is its greatest failure—to remain so far un-reformed. During my sojourn in England in the summer of 1866, I Archbishop Manning, the pervert, delivered an address with this title—"Protestantism a failure," and that evening the electric wires flashed the insult all over the British Isles; and the Protestant heart of England sank back its indignant response in every morning journal the next day. Yes, Protestantism has just made its last failure on the battle-field of Sedgemoor.

than any existing at the time of the first news we have flashing across the ocean is that she has abolished monasteries, and convents, and presently we hear that she has expelled the Jesuits. Failure of Protestantism! Why, the very liberty by which this man spoke the word, and was not molested, is the fruit of that Protestantism which he pronounces a failure. Freedom of speech, freedom of thought, freedom of action, freedom of conscience, all that makes this great age what it is, this noble civilization, this progress, this missionary spirit that girdles the earth, all this wonderful development is the fruit of Protestantism. Protestantism a failure! The same mistake is made by some of our brethren that I made when I first saw the great Mississippi, as it came rolling from the mountains of snow, with a force and speed and volume that awoke the beholder. In places it strikes the bank with such force that a rocky eddy is formed, in which you may be floated by the river, without rowing, for half a mile. These men have got into the eddy, and they think the river is going back. They mistake the eddy for the grand stream. But as at times, the river changes its course and sometimes cuts right through part of a town, tearing away gigantic bluffs, perhaps, and destroys the eddy, the day will come when these brethren will be swept along with the current that is carrying Protestantism, and nothing but Protestantism, to the final triumph of the Anglo-Saxon race.

And now, brethren, we are just entering upon a mighty conflict. We cannot decline it. It is not of our own seeking. It has been forced upon us. We accept it sorrow and tears, but in God's strength. And on this basis we will fight it out—the basis of the Anglican Reformation, as set forth in our articles, homilies and the standard works on the great divines of the Reformation. Our confidence rests upon two things. First, a serene and rooted trust in God, that the cause of the Reformation is the cause of the primitive church in its purest days, that it is the defence of the very life of the Gospel, "the truth as it is in Jesus." Our confidence in the final triumph of our principles of the Reformation is based upon this belief; that such a triumph is bound up with the triumph of the Anglo-Saxon race at least upon this Continent. Who can doubt that it is this race, and not the Latin, which is to gain the mastery of the earth-speaking nations? With the progress of our free institutions, goes step by step, the progress of Protestantism, not a negotiation in this church, but a witness for every truth of God, an opponent of every error of man. I implore you, then, beloved friends, by your love to the Gospel of Christ, by the reverence you bear to the work of England's great confessors in the sixteenth century, by the ashes that rest under the martyrs' monument at Oxford, by the memory of John Wycliff, the morning-star of the Reformation, to resist this tide of error coming in upon us as a flood, and with love to all, bitterness to none, let us stand like a rock for the purity, the unswerving loyalty to the great Head of this Protestant Episcopal Church.

### THE VIRGIN MARY.

There is no theological question relating to a fundamental doctrine of Christianity, which has more deeply interested and agitated the mind of the present generation, than that which relates to the position that properly belongs to the blessed virgin. It is a fundamental doctrine, because it has a special place assigned her both in the Gospel and in the creeds of the Christian Church, and it is of the

highest importance that her place should be rightly understood, because it must exert a powerful influence for good or evil.

It has already caused within this generation a Papal decree, making the dogma of an immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, the mother of our blessed Lord, an article of the Christian faith, of the same importance as the doctrine of the conception of Jesus, and without belief in which there is no salvation. And this has caused some Protestants to speak of her whom God has pronounced blessed, and whom the Gospel says all nations will confess forever to call blessed, with irreverence, if not absolute disrespect and scorn.

There is certainly something very pleasing to a pure mind in the idea of the perpetual virginity of her who found such favor with the holy God, our Heavenly Father, that He chose her to be the mother of His only begotten Son, and that she had an only Son, and died a miraculous virgin. But the point to be determined is, not what is most agreeable to human Christian taste, but what does God Himself teach us respecting it?

No Christian will doubt that God could have supernaturally made Mary a mother, and continued her a virgin had He chosen so to do; but it is only the fact which God has revealed respecting that event, that the Christian world is interested to understand.

To ascertain the Virgin Mary's place in the prophesy, it is necessary to examine first the prophecies respecting her. The first prophetic promise God made to man after his fall, was, "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," that is a virgin's seed. Other prophecies say, the virgin shall conceive, and bring forth a son, that He shall be Immanuel, God with us; but not one of them gives an intimation of her perpetual virginity; not one speaks of any special glory to follow to her; not one even calls her blessed; not one foretells that any special religious reverence, much less worship, will be paid her.

If we turn to the Gospels which describe the fulfilment of the prophecies, the language respecting the Virgin Mary is very guarded, and apparently directed the first time she is mentioned by St. Matthew to contradict the idea of perpetual virginity. He says Joseph did not know her until she had brought forth her first-born son. If marriage were not a holy state, instituted by a holy God, then we might suppose a necessity for perpetual virginity on her part.

The blessed virgin is named or mentioned twelve times by the four Evangelists, and not once is it intimated that she was always a virgin; not once in a way to convey the idea, that any divine honor is to be paid her, or any prayers addressed to her, or any special reverence shown to her.

Indeed, the Gospel record and phraseology utterly controvert the idea that she was immaculate. The phraseology of the Archangel Gabriel at the annunciation is remarkable; his words show that she was neither God nor a sinless being; but only highly favored, or graciously accepted, because the Lord is with thee; and "blessed art thou among women," not as being exalted to the Godhead; not even among angels; but only among her own sex. And then again we are taught that she had the same fallen nature of all her sex, since after the birth of her Immanuel son, she went to the temple and offered the gift offering prescribed by the law of her purification. Nevertheless she was an eminently pure and holy woman, in a godless age and nation, and for this she found favor with God; for this she was chosen as the fittest woman when the time of the incarnation came; may, more, she was fitted by God for this office which she fulfilled so well.

Moreover, St. Mark mentions the Virgin Mary but once, and then to relate the incident recorded by the three other Evangelists respecting his mother and brothers standing without, desiring to speak with Jesus. His answer appears to have been given with special reference to rebuking the idolatry which he foreknew would in future times be paid to his mother; instead of going to or calling for her, he said, looking around on his disciples, "hold my mother and my brethren! for whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and my sister, and my mother." The Greek word denotes a full uterine brother; but Jesus had none, any children born after him would be only half-brothers, and such Jesus had, unless the plainest language of inspired scriptures be utterly perverted. Apparently, it is with a meaning purpose that Jesus puts his mother last, when he declares that the relation of true discipleship to him is as great an honor and blessing as to be his sex. And then again we are taught that she was not to be honored as a virgin, but as a mother. Upon another occasion, our Lord expressed the same sentiment more emphatically to the woman who said, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee and the paps thou hast sucked;" thus our Lord protested beforehand against any divine honors to be paid to his mother, and used language which would have been impossible if the blessed virgin had been immaculate. Finally Jesus' words to his mother at Cana of Galilee, when she offered some advice respecting the miracle there, seem almost harsh, except as they are explained by the fact that he wished his testimony to be recorded for all times that "his mother had no part nor lot in the mission of redemption and salvation he had come to bring." "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" This is the theological and scriptural view of the place of the Blessed virgin in it is revealed by God in the Bible.

From all this we learn that the blessed virgin is the Old Testament pattern of purity, piety, and holiness; that God raised her to that eminent degree; that she might be both fit and worthy to be made the mother of the incarnate Son. She belonged to the old dispensation; in her the sun of righteousness set to rise with healing in his wings; in her immaculate Son of righteousness. The opinions of Christendom respecting the place of the blessed virgin have changed from century to century. There is no historical evidence that any other opinion than the scriptural one named above prevailed respecting her for the first three centuries. The canonical epistles teach no other, the creeds

and epistles of St. Clement and St. Polycarp who were ordained by the Apostles, say nothing of perpetual virginity, or immaculateness, or any worship to be paid her. It took three hundred years for those opinions to germinate.

It is not proposed to review Dr. Seabury's recent tract on the blessed virgin; it has only been glanced over and not read carefully enough to do so. But a glance shows that he has fallen into two popular errors. First, calling the teaching of the fathers the teaching of the Catholic church. Second, asserting that the doctrine of perpetual virginity come to us on the same authority as infant baptism, confirmation and Lord's Supper. The teaching of St. Jerome and St. Augustine are no more the teaching of the Catholic church than the teaching of St. Jerome and St. Augustine are no more the teaching of the former as of no more authority in establishing any Christian doctrine than the latter. They are interesting and valuable as showing the views of eminent men in the church in the age in which they lived. Then, as now, the positive teaching of the church was to be found nowhere but in her creeds, canons, and liturgy. No primitive liturgy says anything of the immaculateness of, or any worship to be paid to, the virgin, and no canon of an Ecumenical Council, either.

Secondly, the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of the Virgin Mary do not come to us as a sacred tradition (I call sacred that which has a scriptural warrant), it has not the same warrant as infant baptism, etc., have. Because although these things are not commanded in the Gospels, yet they are mentioned in the inspired Acts of the Apostles and their epistles; this is not to be found of the perpetual virginity, and marks the infinite distinction between the doctrines. The one the Holy Spirit endorses, and the other He does not.

There are, therefore, now three views of the place of the Virgin Mary in Christendom.—1. That she is the mother of God, immaculate, and entitled to divine honour and worship. 2. That she was the holiest woman produced under the law, and was the virgin mother of Jesus, the Saviour of men, and therefore entitled to be held in reverence, and highly beloved, and 3. That she was only a pious Jewess, the mother of Jesus, but not to be held in any more reverence than any other woman who has been the mother of some good man who has been a great benefactor to mankind.

Exactly midway between these conflicting opinions, and on the oldest scriptural ground, is the place assigned the blessed virgin, by the hand of that branch of the holy catholic church in America, which is called Protestant Episcopal. Now, as in all other ages, the teaching of the church could be maintained only by the Gospel and the liturgy have travelled down, as the two pillars of the religion revealed by the Son of God; and all outside of these has been as shifting as the wind, and unstable as the sand.

While the church does not worship the Virgin Mary as a goddess, nor superstitiously hold that she was always a virgin (because there is no warrant for this in sacred or ecclesiastical history), yet she does hold her up as worthy of veneration for her humility, faith, and holiness, and yearly fulfils her own prophecy, that all nations should call her blessed, on the two holy festivals, which commemorate the angelic communication to her, that she should be the mother of Jesus and on the Purification, when she testified to her maternity by presenting Him in the temple. Neither the Gospels, epistles, or collects for those days intimate that she was immaculate, nor a perpetual virgin. In the liturgical position is the place assigned her in the liturgy of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

### THE POPE'S LETTER.

[FROM MONTREAL GAZETTE, Monday, Nov. 2nd.]

In prospect of the "Ecumenical Council" which is to be held next year at Rome, the Sovereign Pontiff has addressed, as we recently noticed, an earnest and imploring invitation to all "Protestants and other non-Catholics." Not, however, as the London organ of Romanism, the *Westminster Gazette*, states, to attend that council, there to be heard in their defence, or to have their errors refuted; no, there is not a word of this in the invitation; but they are invited in the name of all that can awe them into compliance, to embrace the opportunity which the meeting of that council offers, for submitting themselves unconditionally to the authority of the Pope, and for conforming to the Church of Rome. The invitation is a wide one; it extends to the Anglicans of Great Britain and her colonies; to the widely spread and numerous members of the orthodox Greek Church, to the Episcopalians of the United States, and to the Presbyterians of the Scottish Kirk, as well as to the multitudes who, under other names, are included within the common designation of Protestants. But there is room enough in the head of the successor of St. Peter to receive them all. He is not only ready, but affectionately desirous to embrace all these wandering sons, and that on but one simple, comprehensive condition,—that they acknowledge his undivided authority and return to their obedience. No one then, we think, ought to complain either of the narrowness of oldness of this unlooked for invitation. There are those, perhaps, who may be so cautious as to charge it with being somewhat arrogant in its tone. But these are the ignorant few; a miserable minority amongst the more enlightened and better taught "non-Catholics." So few, that His Holiness cannot even recognize their existence. For he assures us that we Protestants "already all know that he has, despite his unworthiness, been raised to the throne of Peter, and therefore been advanced to the supreme government of the whole Catholic Church, the administration of which has been entrusted to him in divine fashion by Christ himself." Now, if this be indeed so, if it be not only a fact, but a fact universally known and universally admitted, then we contend that it is no arrogance, but a simple exhibition of becoming dignity, to use the style and language of unlimited rule and authority over the whole of Christendom. Nor is it any arrogance to represent the Roman branch of the universal

church as the only one true fold of Christ, and to declare that all who are outside that fold, even though they may "rejoice in the name of Christians," yet are, in no sense, members of the "Church Catholic," have not the "veritable faith of Christ," and are not, and cannot, be assured of their salvation. Neither can it be arrogant to speak of the Pope as possessing himself a personal autocratic sovereignty over the understandings, the faith and the practice of all mankind—an "authority established by God to regulate the conviction of the human intelligence, and to direct the actions of men in their social and private life," as well as to "preside over mankind in all things affecting their eternal welfare."

These claims are, indeed, vast and majestic, such as appear to belong to no being who is less than divine, and some may be disposed to think that it is not only arrogant, but it is something more on the part of a mere human creature to make such claims for himself, but they are nevertheless, such as it is both desirable and becoming that the Pope should assert, if it be, that he is the Vicar of Christ upon earth, the sole and irresponsible sovereign of the whole church, through whom alone grace is dispensed, and to whom it exclusively belongs to declare and preserve the true faith. And we have his Holiness' assertion that this is a fact known and allowed of all men; that it is "what nobody can deny or doubt," what "every body sees," what is "incontrovertible." But is this so? Do not many of the great doctors and learned canonists even of the Romish Church, question, controvert and oppose, this claim on the part of the Pope to personal supremacy over the church? Was it not in resistance to this claim that thousands of Christian men devoted their lives and submitted to persecution and death? Is it not against this other life-Protestants, whatever may be their other differences, unite to raise their voice, as a claim repugnant to holy scripture, opposed to the traditions of primitive Christianity, mischievous to the church, and disloyal to Christ? There is something almost sublime in the audacity which puts forth thus unflinchingly these vast demands upon the allegiance of mankind at the present time. For it is when his throne is defended against the assaults of his loved, and 2. That she was only a pious Jewess, the mother of Jesus, but not to be held in any more reverence than any other woman who has been the mother of some good man who has been a great benefactor to mankind.

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SEENING THE SUN AT MIDNIGHT.—In July, 1865, Mr. Campbell, United States Minister to Norway, with a party of American gentlemen, went far enough north to see the sun at midnight. It was in 63 degrees north latitude and they ascended a cliff 1,000 feet high above the Arctic Sea. The scene is thus described:—"It was late, but still sunlight. The Arctic Ocean stretched away in silent vastness at our feet; the sound of the waves scarcely reached our airy look-out; away in the north the huge old sun swung low along the horizon, like the slow beat of the tall clock in our grandfather's parlour corner. We all stood silently looking at our watches. When both hands came together at twelve, midnight, the full round orb hung triumphantly above the wave—a bridge of gold running due north spanned the waters between us and him. There he shone in silent majesty, which knew no setting. We involuntarily took off our hats—no word was said. Combine the most brilliant sunrise you ever saw, and its beauties will pale before the gorgeous colouring which lit up the ocean, heaven, and mountain. In half an hour the sun had swung up perceptibly on its beat, the colours had changed to those of morning, a fresh breeze rippled over the florid sea, one sonnetter after another piped out of the grove behind us—we had slid into another day."