

# SERMO.

## On Authority in Religion—Preached at a Recent Union Service in the Presbyterian Church of the Pilgrims, Brooklyn, N. Y.—By Rev. Dr. J. M. Clarke.

In the Church of the Pilgrims, where the First and Second Presbyterian churches and the Reformed church on the Heights are holding their summer services, the Rev. Dr. L. M. Clarke recently preached on "Authority in Religion." The text was from Galatians 1:8 and 10: "It was the good pleasure of God to reveal His Son in me."

Today the eyes of a great portion of Christendom are fixed reverently upon the ancient city of Rome, where a newly chosen pope is being crowned and invested with the symbols of his vast power and authority. As fellow Christians, though we worship after a different rite, but as fellow Christians, nevertheless, as members of the one holy catholic church, let us fondly believe and trust that the pope who is now being crowned is a worthy successor to the eminent and venerable prelate whose long career has just closed.

But such scenes as these now transpiring, so conspicuous and attracting world wide attention, may not improve your mind. I want to subject to you this morning a subject which none is more immediately pressing upon the Christian heart, the question of authority in religion. What is religious authority, where is it and how is it secured? Nothing can escape the severest criticism of man, and religion can neither ask nor desire to escape it. Paul himself tried every man's work, of what sort it is, and religion, with the rest, must pass through the fire.

God is the greatest critic of all. It is He who by his providence shakes both the heavens and earth in order that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Surely the foundation sees God shake off from religion some elements or ideas which were not vital to it, and everything that can be shaken must surely fall away.

Naturally, then, I say, the faith that makes the loftiest claims must meet the fiercest blast of light. It ought to be so, because the interests involved are of the highest significance, and, therefore, the spiritual unrest and the religious questioning of any age are a sort of register of the religious life of that age. At the heart of the spirit of inquiry is a symptom of the longing for spiritual authority, an evil which may remain latent in matters pertaining to the soul.

AND THE INTEREST which so large a part of the world takes in the election and coronation of a new pontiff is not because of the splendid pageantry, nor because of the political issues that are embodied, but it is rather because of the multitude of Christians the world around, the Pope of Rome stands for divine and final authority in religion, for them he is the viceregent of Christ, the visible Jesus Christ. When he speaks as the head of the church on earth he speaks with God's voice and he utters God's thought and God's will.

Such outward continuity has impressed many a thoughtful man, and you may recall how Macaulay finished one of his famous periods with the suggestion that this church might last, unchanging, when some traveler from New Zealand, in a future age may stand on a bridge and through him to the bridge and survey the ruin of the old Paul, the relics of an almost forgotten era. But, if this venerable church appears strongly to many a thoughtful man, much more does this assertion of God, the relics of an almost forgotten era. But, if this venerable church appears strongly to many a thoughtful man, much more does this assertion of God, the relics of an almost forgotten era.

There is a wonderful power in the suggestion of divine authority, especially when that suggestion is clothed with great tradition and invested with imposing ceremonies. The force of long established belief—the splendor of art, the magnificence of wealth, the superb assertion of power—these do not fail to add their support to many trembling hearts who desire more than anything else to find some authority upon which to lean their burdened faith.

WHAT ARE WE PROTESTANTS to say to all this? Shall we refuse to believe that God does speak to the Roman bishop and through him to the Roman people? Shall we deny that there is any real authority in religion vested in this successor of St. Peter?

I beg you not to say that. Rather let us claim that God speaks to all men. Let us assert for everyone who will receive it, this right and power to hear the voice of the Almighty, with whom is all authority. Not in indignantly exclaiming against the one man on earth who asserts himself as God's vice-regent, but by waiting patiently in the truth and quiet of our own souls for the revelation of God to us—this is our true position.

DO YOU THINK HEAR? If so, Try a Pound of GARDOL. Sold by your Grocer at 25, 30, 35, 40, 50 and 60c. a pound.

sider the difficulty you will realize how hopeless is the attempt to find original authority in the church. And there others have gone to the Scriptures and have ascertained their authority in religion. Was not this one of the truths of the Protestant Reformation? Bring every questioner the Word of God for final answer. But is this quite so simple as it sounds? Has not almost every wrong been at some time justified from Scripture? Was not slavery defended by Bible texts? Has not nearly every superstition and now outworn belief been upheld by argument from God's word? Yet, does not Scripture itself have to pass through the fires of your own judgment and intelligence and discernment?

We do certainly believe these sacred pages to be God's gift to men. These words do "speak" our souls and the heart of the sense of God about us. We speak to believe that our authority in religion comes to us only over a lapse of nearly twelve centuries, and the witness we, too, have the presence of the same spirit which inspired these pages. We cannot read the meaning of this No, brethren, our faith is not written in some external institution or volume, but it is within—the authority of personal experience. What gives the note of authority is not written utterance? I beg you to keep Paul's words before you: "It was the good pleasure of God to reveal His Son in me!"

It is as true in religion as in science it is experience alone that gives authority. THERE IS NO MIDDLE GROUND. Unless we sustain a personal contact with God, then we have heard no authentic voice in our souls. We may hear many noble and wise words, speaking truths that deserve to be obeyed, but we have not heard that voice which certified itself to our souls so completely and which reveals its character so fully that it draws up into itself that confession of supreme faith.

At first it seems to some like a surfeit of religion upon the vague and unceremonious experiences of the soul. It would be much easier if we could believe that long ago God spoke His word to men once for all and that this word so constitutes final authority for every one. It would be much easier to depend upon the experience of holy men of old than to cultivate that passion of holy living which will permit men to hear His voice in their souls, the note of certainty will be lacking in my voice until God reveals His Son in me.

And it is most depressing to observe how the emphasis today is being placed upon the authority of personal experience. We have seen many cherished traditions and views of the past, truth, No, brethren, our authority is not written in some external institution or volume, but it is within—the authority of personal experience. What gives the note of authority is not written utterance? I beg you to keep Paul's words before you: "It was the good pleasure of God to reveal His Son in me!"

But how different it is when the reality of God and may understand His will as really as the pope and clergy. When the poor and the outcast hear the heart of God, they will live for invisible but eternal things—may have the note of divine authority ringing in his soul. He will hear God's voice and will be real, immovable and eternal. We will find religious authority then by asserting our power to be spiritual and holy and by practicing the life of mortal life, and by cultivating a fellowship with the Father whose voice is ever speaking to men His holy will.

Last of all, what will this finding of authority accomplish in us? Surely, it will make us independent of criticism and fear. To the man who has heard God speak to him fear becomes a stranger. When once the message from God has been surely received, then the conscience and the heart are free. Like Luther, we exclaim: "Here I take my stand. I can do no otherwise." But more than this such a personal experience of God will make us more conscious of His reality and character, to see what He is and what He wills for us. It will keep us very far from pride and arrogance. And God will reveal His Son in us. So that little by little our lives become transformed. We

# SHIP NEWS.

## PORT OF ST. JOHN.

Arrived. Aug 18—St. Norford, 1,320, Lund, from New York, via Boston and Cape Cod. New York, via Boston and Cape Cod. New York, via Boston and Cape Cod. New York, via Boston and Cape Cod.

## SHIP NEWS.

Price Coover, from Yarmouth, NB (Hull sailed); s/sa Gerald White, from Halifax, NB; s/sa Havelock, from Charlottetown; s/sa Fiddlers, from Lunenburg, NB; s/sa James W. from Nova Scotia; George H. Warner, from Digby, NB.

## DOMESTIC PORTS.

Arrived. At Bathurst, NB, Aug 17, s/s Helen Horn, from St. John, NB; s/sa Norman, from St. John, NB; s/sa Pro Patria, from St. John, NB; s/sa Fairist, from St. John, NB.

## BRITISH PORTS.

Arrived. At St. John, NB, Aug 15, s/s City of Boston, from Glasgow, via Liverpool; s/sa Halifax, from Liverpool; s/sa Fraser, from Liverpool; s/sa Lord Londonderry, from Liverpool; s/sa Nether Holme, from Liverpool; s/sa Nether Holme, from Liverpool.

## BIRTHS.

ROBERTSON—In this city at 155 Queen street, on the 19th inst., to the wife of H. E. Robertson, a son.

## MARRIAGES.

PATTERSON-SMITH—In this city on Aug. 17th, 1903, by the Rev. Dr. J. M. Clarke, of St. Mary's church, Archibald D. Patterson, of St. John, N. B., and Miss Margaret Smith, of St. John, N. B.

## DEATHS.

ESTABROOKS—On the morning of Aug. 16th, Hannah Ann, widow of the late O. H. Estabrooks of this city, aged 82.

# 'ESSENCE OF EXCHANGES.

The country will be curious to know what would have happened had Mr. Cox's mandate been ignored by the government.

THE NEW BOSS. (Hamilton Spectator.) According to Hon. Mr. Blair—and he knows—Senator Cox is the master of the administration.

WHAT BLAIR DID. (Toronto Telegram.) Oh, but did not Hon. A. G. Blair on loose and play havoc with Sir Wilfrid Laurier's icing sugar of imperialism?

MR. BLAIR'S REAL REASONS. (Montreal Gazette.) Both Mr. Charleton and Mr. Lemieux have intimated that the real reason of Mr. Blair's leaving the Laurier cabinet have not been disclosed.

AMERICA'S ALLEN INVADERS. (The Week's Progress, New York.) Nearly a million of aliens joined our population during the year ending June 30, 1903—few of whom are educated, people of few whom have any sound ideas of government, few of whom approach to our general standard of living.

DOCTLE JOHN. (Montreal Star.) The docility of Mr. Charleton is a quarry which tends to endeavor to form his opinions for him.

A CHILD WAS BORN. NEW YORK, Aug. 19.—A son was born today to Mrs. C. Oliver Iselin, wife of the managing owner of the Reliance, defender of the America's cup.

Lipton Outclassed the Day Before the Race. NEW YORK, Aug. 19.—A son was born today to Mrs. C. Oliver Iselin, wife of the managing owner of the Reliance, defender of the America's cup.

MILLIONAIRE KILLED BY A DISCHARGED EMPLOYEE. Hempel, After His Arrest for Shooting Mr. Morgan, Hangs Himself With His Suspenders.

OSKOSH, Wis., Aug. 18.—Thomas R. Morgan, a millionaire shoe and door manufacturer, was shot to death Saturday by Frederick Hempel, a discharged employe of the firm, who was under the influence of liquor.

ROCKEY GEORGE ODOM WILL EARN \$50,000 THIS YEAR. Will Receive More Money Than Any Rival by \$15,000 in Fees and Salary.

SARATOGA, N. Y., Aug. 18.—George Odom, the jockey, will earn \$50,000 this season. Capt. Brown pays him a regular fee of \$12,000 a year. This amount is increased by an ambitious fee of \$25 for winning and \$10 for losing mounts.

AT FREDERICTON. FREDERICTON, Aug. 23.—One of the severest electrical storms ever experienced in this section struck this city on the 17th inst., accompanied by pouring rain and a gale of wind blowing seventy miles an hour, but lasting only thirty minutes.

BURGLARS RENT A VAULT. Their Object to Have a Safe Place for Storage of Plunder.

ST. LOUIS, Aug. 18.—Harry Muzzey, alias Stephen J. Lawlor, is the first burglar in St. Louis to employ the modern convenience of a safety deposit vault as a storage place for his stolen goods.

GIRLS DEFEAT MEN IN 10-MILE WALK. GROTON, Vt., Aug. 18.—In a ten-mile walk from here to Wells River, Miss Teresa J. Cochrane, a girl fifteen years of age, and Miss Virginia Fletcher defeated Howard Houghton, Arthur Houghton and Ralph Welch. The young men paid for a supper.

# ST.

NOV. 24.

# ELECTRICAL STORM.

## That of Saturday Night a Record Breaker.

## Lightning Played Havoc About the City—House on Manawagonish Road Badly Damaged—A Narrow Escape.

Saturday night's storm was as severe as it was sudden. The streets were thronged with the usual Saturday night crowd when the deluge came down.

The war of the elements was held back sufficiently to allow the tide to get home, but showed no mercy to the wanderer who was roaming at large. It was a case of getting shelter in the first place that offered.

The sudden fierceness of the storm caused a general panic among those who were about, to say nothing of those at home who expected every minute to have their roof torn off. The wayfarers were the worst off.

In many places bolts of lightning ran riot about the streets, the street cars were stalled, the power having been shut off in the car shed in the north end and dynamo was put out of working order and the entire apparatus saved only by the prompt action of the engineer and staff.

On Paradise row a large tree was struck and a chunk taken out of it as if it had been a log. The trunk of the tree a gentleman received a slight shock, but all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.

At St. Martins, Loch Lomond and Black River the storm was very severe. At all three places it seemed as if severe damage was about to be done almost any moment.