

call of God to leave the false pomp, and glitter, and wisdom of the world, of seeming realities, and go out into the desert to meet God. The desert then becomes to us as holy ground. And it is only when the pure atmosphere of this silent desert has become our native air that we are fitted to go (even then may be with fear and trembling), to lead others, &c., into its sweet solitudes, where the only bread of life falls straight from heaven.

How complete and harmonious the teachings of Scripture are when rightly understood! Compare for instance, the edict of Pharaoh condemning to death all the male children of the Hebrews, with the brutal massacre by order of Herod after the birth of Jesus. The cause is the same, and as a matter of course the effect must be the same; evil fearing good, seeks to throttle it in its infancy; in both cases as in every other case, evil must fail. How was it possible for the purposes of God to be thwarted or His footsteps stayed! and yet, do we not often fear, we live as though we feared that somehow or other God was in danger of defeat? Surely we have got off the track here somewhere.

Pharaoh thought the demands of Moses on behalf of the Hebrews "vain words," and insultingly sent them back to their tasks with their burdens doubled.

He had to learn the awful lesson that on whosoever the stone of truth shall fall it will grind him to powder, and just in proportion to the stubbornness of the resistance will the punishment be. We can realize how hard it must have been for Pharaoh to believe that He, the mightiest autocrat of all the ages, He the creator of an earthly splendor, and representative of an earthly power, whose very ruins over-awe men to day, that he must be subservient to what he deemed the fact of an ungrateful Hebrew. And we, until we have learned that this solid earth in which we seem to plant our feet, and build our hopes so firmly, is but a floating bubble, when compared to an iota of God's truth, we have not caught the meaning and the power of the Master's words.

Pharaoh had to see the things that he loved most, the very things that he worshipped, become objects of loathing to him. He had to see the very highest hopes of his life blasted by death before he would consent to let the people go.

What a picture of the tenacity with which the natural man (as Paul calls it) holds on to the things of time and sense. Pharaoh was quite willing to have given the Hebrews time and place in Egypt to perform their acts of worship. He might have been willing to build them a temple specially, or set apart an Egyptian temple for their use; but this would not do. They could not worship on Egyptian soil. The very animals the Hebrews used for the sacrifice were the Gods of Egypt. The principle is, all or nothing. No niche in the pantheon will do for Christ; but down with the gods of the pantheon. If God is not all he is nothing. What an instructive incident too, is that early ill advised act of Moses in staying the Egyptians in defence of; or in revenge for one of his countrymen? How it reminds one of that impetuous and impotent stroke of Peter's, which was instantly rebuked by Jesus. The kingdom to be established was not the kind established by the sword. If we want an example of that kind look at the Turk.

Nor was this a kingdom to be established by policy and ecclesiastical statemanship. It looked like the death blow to the Hebrew's hopes, when Moses, the friend at Court, had to flee for his life.

What might he not have done for them if he had kept his place as the great Court favorite?

He might have lifted their burdens; given them a political status; brought about a union of the races; assimilated them to the Egyptian, and many other wonderful things possible to the politician. And no doubt wise heads at

Court then spoke of a promising career, out short, of bright hopes blasted and so on; but the narrative says it required 80 years for Moses to unlearn all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and prepare himself to begin his life's work. And yet what a grand renunciation was his! "By faith he refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's daughter." He saw a deathless glory that should outlive the pyramids—a citizenship that Pharaoh could neither give nor take away. Time would fail to speak of all the grand foreshadowings of this book. The pass-over, that mysterious type of "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The wandering in the desert, the giving of the law at Sinai. Suffice it to say—that the Exodus is going on to-day. God's freeborn children are being called to-day from the brick-fields of slavery, where the Pharaohs of this mortal life have kept them in cruel bondage. This ill-provided and yet all provided army is still on the march to a Canaan, that "eye hath not seen or ear heard."

And though many in the host at times look back and long for the gross delights of the old slave days, no soul that has once breathed the air of freedom can ever be a slave again.

THE "MORAL DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH LATENT IN HER FORMULARIES."

(From a Paper read by Rev. A. Fletcher before the Convocation of Southern California.)

This is formative and educational, and in no sense penal in its character.

This surely is the most conspicuous feature of the Church in her various methods and objects, her whole system is impregnated with it. Those who commit themselves to her holy guidance breathe the atmosphere of moral discipline. She is gifted indeed with the exercise of ecclesiastical discipline, she wields the power to punish, the terrible tendency in the human heart to be defiantly wicked rendering such a power necessary, but surely her natural aptitudes, the reason of her being, is to guide by less coercive measures, to lead rather than to drive, to discipline in the original and more correct meaning of the word, rather than to discipline in its acquired sense. She would much rather instruct in the love of God than inspire with the fear of God. And so all her methods, all her formularies are framed, having this essential end in view. Her plan is to form, to remodel, to instruct, to educate, to discipline in this sense, rather than to punish. She delights as a loving mother to take the little infant, the "child of wrath" and transform it by mysterious washing into the "child of God," to unfold to its budding mind the wondrous love in the "covenant of grace," to confirm those impressions when reasonably understood, and to lead the youthful footsteps into the very presence at her altar.

All her formularies are permeated through and through with this principle of moral discipline. Time does not permit a reference to them severally. My object is to suggest rather than to develop.

I shall briefly refer to one or two of the most prominent parts of her system.

The first is that which is so often referred to in papers of this kind *The Christian Year*. What a marvellous power of moral discipline, both as regards doctrine and practice, is comprised in this truly wonderful production of the wisdom of the age, known by the comprehensive title, *The Christian Year*: regarding doctrine in the instructive and conservative character of the systematic presentation of Divine truth which is therein set forth; and regarding practice, in the effect upon the life of a full and faithful observance of the Calendar

in all its features in the case of those who observe it: Daily Prayer (morning at least), Weekly Communion, and on Holy Days; the due observance of the days of fasting throughout the year, the Lenten, and we might include the Advent season, the Ember days, the Rogation days, and all the Fridays throughout the year; and this done not in a fitful way, as if it were a burden heavy to be borne, subject to the conscience of the individual clergyman, but conformed to with a loving obedience, as a duty of bounden obligation, preached, practised, and subscribed to by all, the faithful laity, when practicable, as well as the clergy. Is there not, I say, an incalculable possibility of good in the moral and educational discipline which the Church in her formularies lays ready at our hands?

I do not pretend, nor would not wish it to be thought that I administer my parish on the model which is here presented. Unfortunately I do not. I find it *impracticable*. True, there are a number of parishes where such an observance is aimed at, and very fairly carried out; all honor to the priests of such parishes, they are doing their duty, but I am writing of an observance which as yet is more ideal in general than actual, and of a discipline which is *latent* in the formularies of the Church, and which too often is so latent as to be practically *dead*. But such an observance should be made practicable. It should be agitated, and preached about until both clergy and laity take to it as kindly as to their morning meal; for I think it is evident to all that if the wise provisions of the Church in this matter were faithfully carried out a great power of discipline would be exercised for the education and spiritual training of her children.

One other matter I would touch upon; the disciplinary power of the Church in her *Daily* and *Eucharistic* offices. These are framed not only to be the vehicles of praise and prayer, and confession, but that they may train and educate the spirit until it come to the perfect man in Christ. How strong and noble and inspiring they are! All undue tendency to emotionalism is restrained. The spirit is strengthened, not weakened, by the manly aspirations which lead it Heavenward. Every tendency to *individualism* is repressed, that most prolific source of every imaginable evil, the individual, is subordinated to the body of Christ—the congregation assembled—and even in his confession of sin is humbled by his comparative insignificance. There is no room for spiritual pride, or mock humility here; the vigorous, earnest tone of every word and expression excludes all such thoughts as paltry and impossible. The quiet impressive force of wrapped adoration breathes in every sentence, and the spirits of the faithful bow before their God.

Let the members of the Church, both clerical and lay, be thoroughly imbued with a knowledge of the powers of discipline that are latent in her formularies, and let them contribute to the exercise of that discipline by a firm adherence to her principles. We believe that the Church was the *Divinely constituted*, and while she remained undivided, the Divinely-inspired, interpreter of Holy Scripture; and we are persuaded that the Prayer Book, though not perfect in itself, is the best embodiment of systematized Christian truth which has as yet been developed by the Church.

Let us learn then to live out her rules and requirements in our daily life and practice, making them the active, living realities of the present, not the dead worn out rules of a past generation. She is the living Voice of God, to us her members, interpreting to us the Word of God; may we so hear and heed her slightest whisper that in becoming her more faithful sons, in rendering more consistent obedience to her methods, we may become the more consistent, and more faithful sons of God.

For correspondence see p. 11.