

PROTESTANTISM

WHAT IS IT?

Michael Andrew Chapman in America

The recent "Anglo-Catholic Congress" in London which was made up of representatives of the extreme "High Church party" in the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America was not only an interesting and important phenomenon in the realm of religion, but a serious indication of the trend of the times in non-Catholic circles. The more than 10,000 people who several times filled the Albert Hall at the meetings of the Congress, the stately processions of coped and mitred prelates; the solemn High Masses in various London churches, with Bishops from America, Canada, Australia and South Africa as well as England officiating with all the pomp of Catholic ceremonial, made an impressive picture which caught the public eye far more strikingly than the more conservative but official gathering of the Bishops at Lambeth.

home in its own fold—their restoration of liturgical worship has examples even for us within the fold of St. Peter. Their churches are often models of liturgical exactness. What, says the Catholic; what, triumphantly rejoins the Anglican; what has such a movement as this to do with Protestantism? And Dr. Hall has answered both this question and that which serves as caption to this article. For there is one point of agreement among Protestants, and only one, from the Reverend Father Altus in his Gothic chasuble to the Reverend Mr. Calvin in his shirt-sleeves on the revival platform, and that is repudiation of the Pope.

Catholic countries is mooted, they both made speeches in favor of it and agree to help raise the necessary funds to send Y. M. C. secretaries to the benighted Papists in the Canal Zone. It would be trite to say that Protestantism is a negative religion; that its adherents deny rather than affirm; that it is what they do not believe that makes them Protestants. But the things they do not believe are so many and so varied, and differ so among the diversity of Protestant churches that it would be impossible to find a distinguishing Protestant trait aside from that which I have mentioned. I do not think, therefore, that it would be unjust to say that Protestantism, as it exists today, reduced to its lowest common divisor, analyzed to its ultimate essence, is nothing more nor less than the denial that the Pope of Rome is the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth and the visible and infallible Head on earth of the Church which Our Divine Lord and Saviour founded. The very core of the Papal claim is that such a dogma is a vital element of the Catholic Faith, that without subscription to it a man cannot be a Catholic, however earnestly he may believe every other tenet of the Church, however honestly he may believe himself to be a Catholic in other respects.

Protestantism, like murder, will out. It may disguise itself cleverly; it may even be honest in its conviction that the clothes make the man; nay, it may go deeper and say "possibly my grandfather was a Protestant, but I, using the same liturgy, governed by the successors of the same Bishops, am not. But once apply the touchstone of Peter, and how the gold becomes dim! Nearly every Protestant sect, except those which are frankly Unitarian and agnostic, which yet, because they are anti-Roman, can and do call them Protestants, has points of resemblance to the Catholic Church and the Catholic Faith. There are a few Protestants left who still believe in the Bible in spite of Tubingen. The Methodist Episcopal view of assigning pastors is more like that of Catholic Bishops than the vestry system of the Episcopalians. In externals there is a constant drift towards architectural and ceremonial features which are certainly historically associated with Catholicism. These outward manifestations stop with aestheticism except in the case of the Anglicans, and with them there is the farther advance towards faith and practice of which the Anglo-Catholic Congress is the flower. It is easy to lose sight of the wood for the trees. But back of them all, highest and lowest alike, is the determining factor, the Protestant solvent, the ineradicable stain, the all-permeating scent of anti-Papalism.

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OBITUARY

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On August 31st, Sister Mary Bride of the House of Providence, Dundas, was called to her eternal reward. Death was a happy ending to a life of suffering. This good religious had borne patiently with ailment since the onset of a painful illness for several years and Saint Joseph obtained for her many consolations at the hour of her departure from this world.

DEAD SOLDIERS' ROSARIES TO BE KEPT AT LOURDES

Lourdes, August 23.—It is now agreed that the inside oratory of the Inter-Alleed Memorial to be erected at Lourdes, in front of the basilica, will be the depository of all the souvenirs—rosaries, medals, crosses, etc.—sent there by the families of allied soldiers who died during the War, and these Articles may be placed preserved close to the Miraculous Virgin. Mass will be offered there for all time for the dead of the War, and pilgrims will find there a place to pray for them.

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