

JUNE 24, 1938.

CONSISTENCY.

So far as we can learn from their history, the early Christians were not given to worry over the "Bible question." It may be that other things kept them busy; what with establishing churches, and looking out for the poor and getting ready for the beasts or the flames, they had little time for criticism either higher or lower. But the main reason of what might seem their oversight was that the "Question" did not exist, and the Bible itself, as we have it, was unknown to men like Stephen and James. In fact, the Founder of Christianity did not lay much stress on scriptural polemics. Though he certainly might have put His doctrine, clearly and categorically, into a volume of reasonable size, He did not, to our knowledge, leave any writing beyond a few characters traced in the sand. If He gave His disciples instructions to write, no mention of the apostolic calling, the majority of the chosen twelve were sadly wanting in duty. It is no excuse for them that the press was not yet invented, nor the Bible Society organized; neither will it do to say that thousands of people, with souls to save, were unable, for one reason or another, to read what they might have fixed on papyrus or parchment. If it were their business as founders of the Church to write books they ought to have done so and left their works to succeed them in the Apostolate, instead of ordaining other men and commissioning them to teach.

The whole matter could have been arranged before they separated. There was no mistaking the nature of the task imposed upon them by Christ. "Teach all nations" is a command so explicit that they who heard it, being neither ubiquitous nor immortal, ought to have agreed at once on a proper distribution of the "written word." The necessity of some such plan should have appeared even more clearly when they learned that the Holy Ghost was to teach them "all truth."

What better chance to complete the Scriptures than that Pentecost morning, which not only filled them with the Divine Spirit, but gave them a power of speech which all the peoples of earth could understand? Some of the Apostles, it is true, have left writings that are inspired and contain much of the doctrine and moral teaching of their Master. But what surprises us is that they did not get together a canon of books of the Old and the New Testaments, seal it with a synodal approbation, and declare them to be the sole rule of saving faith. Perhaps they suspected that this very assertion would occasion more quarrels of interpretation than any other line in the Bible; or it is possible that some of them, having died before the New Testament was given, could not give their approbation. At any rate, it would seem that quite a different idea had possessed them. Merging their individuality in a teaching body, and looking into the future beyond their own life limit, they conceived that what Christ told them was meant for the Church. Hence they understood how Christ could be with them "all days, even to the consummation of the world," and why He that would not hear the Church should be regarded "as a heathen and a publican." Hence, too, the conviction with which they imbued their converts that the Church, not the Bible, was the "pillar and ground of truth." Such notions, of course, cannot be called "advance"; but they have a peculiar interest, because they obtained among a class of persons who are generally regarded as first-rate Christians.

Though no exact date had been announced in the Bible for the "consummation of the world" an impression sprang up early in the sixteenth century that Christ had ceased to be with the Church, or, what amounted to the same thing, that the Church had ceased to be the "body of Christ." It was not merely that men in their lives fell short of the standards which the Church maintained, but that the Church herself, despite the indwelling of the Paraclete, had gotten astray. Here at last, after a standstill of fifteen hundred years, was something like advance! And if the advances had appealed to some new principle or supported their claims with a fresh revelation they might have had logic at least on their side. But their cry was "back to Christ and the Apostolic age." And strangely enough it was made to appear, though all the Christian centuries had not perceived it, that the Bible alone was the source of belief and all its silent pages the arbiter of all disputes. Every man became a Church unto himself, deciding by his private judgment those things which an apostle had found "hard to understand." No warrant of Scripture of course, could be adduced to uphold the "reform," as none could be found to prove that Christ had failed in His promise or changed. But it was a pleasant way of settling things, especially since the rule held as well for morals as for faith. A large responsibility, no doubt, was thrown upon the Holy Ghost, for if it took Divinity to inspire the writer of a book it was more than Divinity could do to make all the interpretations of private judgment equally true.

A startling amount of naive confidence in the traditional Church must also have been required to make the new apostles accept from her hands the Scriptures to which they appealed. Shrewder men, though less perfect, would have asked: If the Church has corrupted her doctrines, how do we know that she has not been meddling with the sacred text? But passing

over these and other troublesome questions, which were swept aside in the ardor of reform, it is remarkable that cooler heads did not see what natural results would follow. If the old Church had fallen into error, what was to save the new one from any better? And then, as every man was to read and judge for himself, it was evident nonsense to talk of orthodox or heretic any longer. To say nothing of a respectable majority who would never learn to read, and who had to depend upon the word of their teachers, it was certainly bad form for a preacher to get up and expound his views before an educated audience with the Bible on their lap. It was worse than impolite, it was uncharitable and inconsistent, to rail at those whose interpretation of the Bible led them to hold views in which their pastors did not concur. And to impose upon the pastor himself, in his "vow of ordination," any particular form of belief was obviously to forestall and condemn those changes which further study of the Scripture or brighter gleams of the "Spirit" might produce in his faith. But the possibility of widest import was most strangely overlooked. If every one, independently of any authority, has a right to judge the several texts of Scriptures as he shall please, what is to hinder less reverent minds, from passing judgment on the book as a whole, calling in question its inspiration and reducing it even as a human document to the level of legend and myth?

History has answered the question too plainly. The movement which began by exalting the Scriptures has ended by tearing them to shreds. Christ is become another Socrates, and the Holy Ghost, who was supposed to be the guide of Bible readers, is replaced by Strauss and Renan. Such is the logical outcome of the doctrine of private judgment set up in opposition to the authority of the teaching Church.

But now comes the third and most interesting phase in this evolution. A learned man, following the dictates of his scholarly judgment, proposes to search the Scriptures with the aid of modern critical methods, and to hold certain opinions of his own regarding their contents. Whereupon he is suspended from his ministerial office for having "uttered, taught and propagated views, doctrines and teachings as set forth in said charges contrary to the essential doctrine of Holy Scripture and the standards of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and in violation of the ordination vow of said appellee (Briggs), which said erroneous views and doctrines strike at the vitals of religion and have been industriously spread." Had this document issued from the Vatican Council, a good deal would have been said about the "intolerance of the Church," and so on, but no serious man would have brought up the charge of inconsistency. Nor need we bring it up here, for our feelings towards Dr. Briggs and all other Presbyterians are only of the kindest sort. Principles are at stake in this matter even more than individuals. To our way of thinking, a body which claims to be the true Church of Christ does nothing amiss in asserting its authority and sitting in judgment on its members. A legitimate zeal for the "vitals of religion" may oblige an organization to gird itself about with claims which were discarded three centuries back. But seeing that private judgment is, from the Protestant view-point, the very first and most essential "vital of religion," we fail to understand how this can strike at itself.

If the same fate is in store for others who imitate Dr. Briggs, the wisest thing a candidate for orders can do is to ascertain before taking his ordination vow just how far the standards of the Church allow him to go in his exercise of private judgment. But here again the trouble would be to decide who shall interpret the standards. As these are not infallible, their meaning is subject to change, and the strongest influence for effecting the change is the leaning of men like Dr. Briggs and his friends. That such modification may be brought about is already the conviction, if not the hope, of many earnest men in the Presbyterian Church. On this score we have no predictions to make. We have seen the same tendency at work in countries like Germany, far more conservative than America. Harvauck and his school have cast the tatters of canon and creed upon the ebb-tide of criticism, and it is not for us to say what is left. But when the final revision is accomplished, we should be glad to know what proportion of its members yet cling to that Church as an offset to those who have drifted by broader channels into wider seas. Possibly those that remain may be able to show us the logical connection between the three phases of Church development which we have outlined here. Until this is done we have no desire to zig-zag from authority to private judgment and back to authority again.

Since we must have a "judiciary" in matters of faith, we prefer to accept that which alone, in the face of all that human variations, has asserted its right to judge. For us this claim itself is a note of the true Church, inasmuch as it is a carrying out of Christ's command. Teaching without authority is no teaching at all so far as religion is concerned. And authority which cannot trace its continuity through time to its origin in Christ is an empty usurpation. A Church founded by Christ, teaching and deciding in His name—this is the only way we can realize that He is with us always. —Philadelphia Catholic Times.

Minard's Liniment cures La Grippe.

"TRUE AMERICANISM."

Father Sherman's Eloquent Address Against Alien Societies.

Rev. Father Sherman, S. J., spoke on "True Americanism" at Exposition Hall, Omaha, on Monday evening. Directly above the speaker hung a large painting of General Sherman, the committee on decoration believing that in placing it there they were not only honoring both father and son, but appropriately placing before the public gaze on this occasion the well-known likeness of one whose Americanism and loyalty were never called in question.

Among other things, Father Sherman said: "The right of religious liberty is one of the principles that made this glorious nation. It is not true Americanism to seek to trample upon the religious rights of our fellow citizens. (Applause.) By the term 'Americanism' I mean citizens of America, and by America I mean the United States. A man may be a Canadian or a Mexican and be regarded as an American. There is no such recognized adjective as 'United States.' The term 'American' should distinctly belong to a citizen of the United States. I hold the same opinion in this respect as the distinguished James Gillespie Blaine. (Prolonged applause.) He said that the United States is America and America is one. When I say the doctrine of America, I therefore mean the doctrine of the United States and not the doctrine of Canada or Mexico. I believe in sole allegiance, to the principles of American independence—principles of liberty gained by our great grand-fathers when they severed the strings that tied them to the skirts of England. (Applause.) Americanism is not one opinion—a universal unanimity. It includes, among other things, a combination of sentiments, many differences of opinion upon many subjects. Differences of this kind, however, should be settled openly and honorably and with some regard for truth. (Applause.) They should not be settled in secret lodges, where men's rights are trampled upon. (Prolonged applause.)"

Patrick Henry and the forty men who framed the constitution, which was purchased by the blood of the revolution—now believed in open discussion on that sacred subject. No man ever got up and said that religious liberty should be restrained in those days. The first principle of America is liberty, and especially religious liberty. (Vociferous applause.) Religion vests rights and should not be thrown down as a fire brand into the midst of political life. There is discord enough in politics now. (Prolonged applause.)"

These zealous assassins of truth, these products of secret organizations that are anti-American in sentiment and principle, falsely prate that the Catholics are seeking to unite State and Church. I stand before you tonight as a citizen—a proscribed citizen, if you will. I might plead that my father fought for the union. (Tremendous applause.) Union means peace; these assassins mean war. Union means concord; they mean discord. They are men utterly opposed to principle.

ORANGEMAN'S IDEA OF LIBERTY. "Dean Swift once said that if you want to get an idea into an Orangeman's head you first should get an angler and bore a hole in his cranium and then drive the idea in. (Laughter.) So it is with these Orangemen who are seeking to stir up religious strife in this country."

"The Orangeman's idea of liberty is to kill everybody who differs from him upon religion. (Laughter.) He does not realize that he is committing treason in denying religious liberty. "When a citizen of the United States takes the oath of allegiance he agrees that all must have equal rights; and yet these so-called exponents of America principles who have started this religious strife profess great loyalty to the constitution upon which this grand republic was founded!"

SPRITUAL AND POLITICAL ALLEGIANCE. "If the Pope imagined that he had political power and called upon me to renounce my allegiance as an American citizen to the president of the United States, the elected chief of the American nation, I would resist the Pope. (Applause.) If President Cleveland called upon me to renounce my spiritual allegiance to the Pope as Vicar of Christ and the head of the Church, I would resent such an interference. (Applause.)"

"Monsignor Sarilli, the Pope's representative at Washington, is a modest little Italian gentleman. He is in this country mostly as an arbiter, and goes about his business like a plain every-day American citizen. He has no strength to threaten a nation. He is a man without any shadow of physical force, and there is none at his command. I therefore cannot conceive how he can endanger even the power of a village magistrate. Why, the other day he obeyed the summons of a Jersey judge. (Laughter.) Yet this is the man who is pictured as the standing menace to the safety of this great, powerful union! (Laughter.) There is no danger of papal aggression dividing this country. The danger in politics is not a spiritual one. (Applause.) The idea is ridiculous. "The constitution says that there shall be no religious test for office; it does not seek to ostracize Catholics from the political rights that every American citizen should possess. These men seek to stand in the way of the constitution, like a man who puts

an orange blossom in his hat and jumps in front of an express train that is going sixty miles an hour in the hope of stopping it. (Laughter.)"

GETTING AN ENEMY ON THE RUN.

"General Stanton's idea of fighting was to get his enemy on the run, then stick a bayonet in him and keep him on the run. (Applause.) I treat these people. (Applause.) I fired the first gun in this campaign at Detroit, at U. K. Booth, the unknown assassin of the constitution. I have got him on the run, and I propose to put the whole organization on the run, if it takes every drop of life blood in my body. (Cheers.) "Every man, one and all, who belongs to the secret organization that seeks to tear away constitutional rights is a traitor. They are all traitors, and like Benedict Arnold, they meditate for excuses for their treason. Arnold's punishment shall be theirs also. (Applause.) Is there one of these cowards here to-night who will get up and declare his principle? (A pause and no response.) You may rest assured there are some in the audience listening to a sheathed sword, what would be their fear of an unsheathed sword? They make assertions utterly devoid of truth. I say they are liars. (Applause.)"

"Among other assertions they say that Catholics are not loyal Americans. How about General Sherman (tremendous applause), Thomas Ewing, Captain Washington of Company A at Vicksburg, Luke Clarke and thousands of men in blue that fought for the flag we all love so well? (Cheers.) Is there a Roman Catholic who planted the stars and stripes on the parapet at Vicksburg after three other union soldiers had fallen in the attempt. It was a Roman Catholic who led the most daring charge on that occasion and fell just outside the trenches of the enemy. Had it not been for Irish bayonet and the soldiers who came over with Lafayette in the revolution, how would American independence have been gained? George Washington instructed his soldiers not to speak against the Catholic religion. Had it not been for Roman Catholic assistance we would not now be a nation. (Applause.)"

PROFESSES THE REPUBLICAN FAITH.

"I could take from my quiver many more arrows barbed with silver that would reach your hearts and disprove this silly assertion that Roman Catholics were not loyal Americans. Who ever heard of the 'loyalist party' in America in politics? I am not a politician, though my sympathies lean to the principles of the republican party; (Major Furay—"Bully for you, the republican party and there is the democratic party, the populist party and other parties, but no 'loyalist' party exists.")

"Now for the persons of these political nonentities, these Hessians, who attack us. It is composed of all kinds of ingredients. There is, notably, the spavined hack of politics. There is another spavined hack, also—the fallen priest. Among the chosen head of this secret organization there is a fallen priest, who is like Judas, except that he had not sense enough left when he fell to go out and hang himself. (Laughter.) This broken down political hack and this fallen priest, the leaders of this crew, are breeders of the worst of all discord—religious discord. On their heads will fall the responsibility. (Applause.) No man in America will have his rights threatened, especially those men whose great-grandfathers were with Washington at Valley Forge, and who themselves wore the uniform of loyalty at Shiloh, Vicksburg, at Atlanta (cheers) and other tests of devotion to our flag. These men will not be crowded down by a few Hessians led by fallen priests. (Applause.)"

"By a strange dispensation of God a soldier's son is a Catholic priest. (Loud applause.) He stands before you with a sword of truth to-night, ready to fight for the rights of every man, be he Jew or Gentile. (Cheers.)"

I have a plan of treatment for these Hessians. I move that the Government give them a reservation and fence it in with a red fence, and let the red-coated soldiers go guard duty on top of the fence. (Laughter.) Paint their cottages orange color and give them a lake upon which they may float a crescent-shaped ship similar to the one Washington Irving describes in the "Knickerbockers." On the poop of this ship let them erect an equestrian statue of William of Orange. (Laughter.) Let them adopt Washington Irving's "Knickerbockers" at their Bible. (Laughter.) The word "Catholic" should be prohibited in conversation, and they should be left to their own isolation where they cannot poison the public mind. (Major Furay—"I second that motion.") Interrupted by the audience with a chorus of votes in the affirmative.)

"I am surprised that John Wanamaker issued those Columbus stamps, because every time a man licks one his face gets so near to a Roman Catholic." (Applause and laughter.)

Father Sherman concluded his lecture by reading from the "private work" ritual of the Junior Order of United American Mechanics, and proceeded to pour hot shot into that order, by saying that "their vested rights American citizens their rights are a dream of the moment, but it is a menace to the peace and happiness of man that should be downed."

Angels of Charity.

Rev. Dr. Howard Henderson, a prominent Protestant minister and journalist of Cincinnati, paid the following beautiful tribute to the Sisters of Charity in the Cincinnati Post of October 14th: "It is said that when the cholera visited Florence, a bevy of beautiful girls volunteered to nurse the sick, soothe the dying and comfort the bereaved. Unattended, and wearing only a simple badge, betokening their mission of mercy, they threaded the narrow streets and alleys in search of the afflicted, and passed through crowds of ruffians unmolested. What was their protection? Not that the city was hung in weeds, not that every house had its sufferer and many its dead—when death has held high carnival—when death was abroad like the angel of doom that destroyed Sennacherib and his host; hearsees have run mad races to funerals, and reckless and dissipated youth cast dice on their father's coffin and rattled off a clog dance on their mother's tombstone. The rude soldiers of the Crimea kissed the shadow of Florence Nightingale on the wall. A raving maniac, listening to the silvery voice of Elizabeth Fry, fancied that he heard the converse of angels. Why is the Roman Catholic Church strong?"

Is it because of her magnificent cathedrals and mighty ministers, or her Georgian chants and sacred scriptures and pictures, or her sublime Latin liturgy? Nay, nay! Her greatest power is in her charity, and she is impregnable while she continues to multiply her benevolent institutions, and so long as her sweet-faced and gentle-hearted Sisters of Charity smooth the pillows of suffering and the corrugated brows of the anguished and take to their ward the orphans that otherwise would be left to struggle unfriended and alone, and her Brothers of mercy give ears to the deaf, eyes to the blind, limbs to the lame, and hope to the despairing. Protestantism is learning that to rival her power it must emulate her love, multiply her colleges and hospitals, and make common such philanthropists as Howard and Oberlin and Wilberforce. One cannot contemplate the possibility of a cholera epidemic without calling before the mind visions of that which brighten the scene of desolation, and like a rainbow born of storm lending to the war as elements a beauty born of heaven. God bless the Sisters of Charity! God bless the Deaconesses! —Antigonish Casket.

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Father Damien, S. J.

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A Waste of Money

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