

York, with its one Toronto, its new some 76 Churches, increase, and where St. James' stood, re, vastly improved led for alterations, sh Church in our satisfactory state ertheless a blank, of your Lordship, rchmen associated o be filled up, for

ALBAN'S CATHE-

y under way, and Divine service is cannot, my Lord, the Christian zeal ers of the Church ity in wealth and the province, will d their means and s placed upon the o distant day.

advantage to the assistance of the ed, but it will be hich can scarcely out its cathedral, and.

ou too long, and earnest and heart- lessing upon your may speedily be appy consumma-

SIES.

the first part of the ic preached by the e church, Toronto, e text Gal. v. 19-20. at our pulpit utter-

We have sermons purpose of warning, arers, but we lack teaching principles his is not obscure. ch for being taught h of pathos tells on re than any instuc- 7 of the past. Be- dea of their being to the easy flow of etoric or anecdote. al one too. It is lls in the long run. ist and the Church, st of history or the ould not be better asionally, at least, of Christ and the tions of the world nothing left. The d, coincident as it but feebly grasped is of life forbid the eologians, and the e to us either by ling. The conse- ogy of the Church ular theology of esies, private and ed version has it ning of the Greek the selection and doctrine or prac- espective of the as not testified to verywhere and by private judgment orical Church we d classed by St.

Paul with "the works of the flesh," such as drunkenness and idolatry. Yet so it is. History has justified him. Ignorance and self-conceit have been the fruitful mothers of heresies. Indeed St. Paul does not think it worth while to waste words in proving it, he merely says that heresies are works of the flesh, and that they are manifest—that is, are manifestly so. Now if Christian people could be brought to believe St. Paul and history, could they but realize the sinfulness of

THE SIN OF HERESY,

from which they so constantly pray to be delivered, and remember that St. Paul says that they who "do or practise such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God," an end would be put to the making of new denominations and creeds. Men would understand that whatsoever is new in religion is not only *ipso facto* false, but dangerously false. Of course harmless, pious opinions which men entertain on subjects not defined by the Church are not heresies. They become heresies only when they are elevated into articles of faith, against the authority of the Church. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth an Act of Parliament was passed which provided that "nothing should be adjudged to be heresy but only such as have heretofore been determined, ordered, or adjudged to be heresy by the authority of the Canonical Scriptures, or by the first four General Councils, or any of them." In all the legislation of Church and State at the time of the Reformation the standard of orthodoxy was the Primitive Church, and the Scriptures as evidencing that practice. Moreover, that there should be no mistake as to the meaning of the words, "the Primitive Church," an Act of Parliament was passed in the first year of Edward the Sixth, by which the word primitive is defined to mean "the space of 500 years and more after Christ's ascension." Had these common sense Acts of Parliament been obeyed we should have been saved from a whole

BROOD OF MODERN HERESIES.

But the right of private judgment soon became in the popular estimation the right to judge without competent knowledge or clear evidence. The right which every man has, or ought to have, to read the Scriptures came to mean the right to interpret them too. The Bible has been, consequently, treated as a contemptibly easy book, though it might have occurred to thoughtful men that a book concerning the meaning of which such a host of differences existed could not be so very easy to understand without learning and study. And here a curious phenomenon presents itself to our minds. It is the fact that the positive precepts of Scripture are disobeyed just in proportion to their unmistakable plainness, while those precepts which can only be inferred by much reasoning are believed and practised. The plainest precepts are utterly neglected, while those which are scarcely alluded to, or concerning which the New Testament is wholly silent, are insisted on and obeyed. The most explicit commands in the New Testament are unanimously ignored by Christians. The precept against eating blood, though enjoined by a council, is implicit and obsolete. The directions for the observance of love feasts, anointing the sick in order to their cure, and washing each other's feet, are treated as nullities. No one now gives the least heed to the command against suing brethren in civil courts. Now, by way of contrast, see how commands which are with great difficulty deduced from the New Testament are believed in and obeyed. The substitution of the Lord's day for the Sabbath, infant baptism, and the Divinity of Christ are doctrines felt to be of universal obligation, and yet there does not exist a single independent text in their favor in the New Testament. The cause of this paradox is the fact that the observance of the Lord's day and infant baptism were universally practised before a line of the New Testament was written, and the Deity of Christ was not asserted or argued, simply because no Christian doubted it. It is therefore quite as necessary to learn how to read the Bible as how to read any other translated classic. Just remember some of the facts and the difficulties we meet with when we read the New Testament for controversial or doctrinal purposes. We have the authorized version, and the revised

version differing from it in 29,000 places—most of the differences however being unimportant, but some being very serious. Then there is the Douay version of the Romanists, and the Baptist version, peculiar to that sect. Even the best scholars with all their critical acumen are sometimes perplexed, first as to the true original text, and lastly as to the meaning of the words translated. Again, in the original language there was no punctuation, and we all know how much the sense of a passage is affected by a comma or a note of interrogation. Thus, when St. Paul asks: "Who is he that condemneth?" the authorized version answers: "It is Christ that died," making Christ to condemn us. But if we put the answer interrogatively—Is it Christ that died?—we make St. Paul to speak ironically, so that a note of interrogation makes all the difference between an assertion and a denial concerning our condemnation or acquittal by Jesus Christ. Even the use or omission of capital letters affect the sense of Scripture, and decide whether spirit means the spirit of man or the Holy Spirit of God, and whether Lord means Jehovah or earthly master. But as the most valuable because the oldest mss. are all written in uncial, that is, in capital letters, a great element of uncertainty exists in our printed Bibles. Hence it is that Unitarians place capitals for the pronouns referring to God the Father and omit them when they refer to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. Again, most of us have been struck with the fact that the Psalms of the Prayer-book differ greatly from the Psalms of the Bible, and that all other portions of Scripture, except the Epistles and Gospels, given in the Prayer-book, are taken from older and obsolete versions. We are struck too by the fact that our blessed Lord and His apostles almost always quoted Scripture from the Greek and not from the original Hebrew, even when they differed greatly. Considerations like these, and they might be multiplied, serve to show how much there is to be learned before we can safely enter on discussions or controversies to be decided by appeal to Scripture. We have to learn also that it is often necessary to surrender our own cherished opinion, that is our own heresy, even though some texts of Scripture may seem to support it. If we be told on good authority that the earliest Christian authors, the Fathers, as we call them, who lived when Greek was a living and spoken language and when the apostles had but recently died, did not interpret St. Paul as we do, modesty at least should make us distrust our judgment. We have too many representatives to-day of those Corinthians of whom St. Paul said:—"How is it then, brethren? When ye come together each one hath a psalm," that is a psalm of his own, that he was eager to sing, each one hath a teaching, a revelation, and an interpretation of his own, that he was anxious to force on others. One crumb of comfort St. Paul found in the heresies of the Corinthians, namely, that orthodox Christians were brought into a greater prominence by the contrast. We, too, are sometimes cheered by the same contrast. But after all, how rare comparatively is the Church member who walks consistently and obediently in the ways of the Church because he has proved the Church's teaching to be true, and is so rooted and grounded in his position that no whirlwind of temptation would avail to tear him from it? Such a membership is, I fear, the exception and not the rule; and it is when we come to discuss the words Church, sect, and schism that we find the weakness that results from ignorance. For why have multitudes left the Church on little or no ground, or how do they attempt to justify their conduct? They say the Church of England began its existence 800 years ago, and if it was lawful to found a new Church then it was lawful to do so now. And yet we should smile at the politician who should gravely inform us that the British constitution began with and dated from the Reform bill. The Church must have existed before it could be reformed, as a house must have been built before it could be repaired. I know of a lawyer who could not be convinced that the Church of England did not take its rise at the Reformation, till he ascertained that a lot of land which had been leased for 999 years in the reign of Alfred the Great, had reverted to the dean and chapter of St. Paul's cathedral the other

day by the expiration of the lease. This continuity of the Church's life is to many a hard lesson. They dislike the phrase apostolical succession. They think that it unchurches the denominations. But let us substitute for it the phrase historical succession. It will answer quite as well for the main purpose of setting them thinking, and we shall hear less and less of the Church of England being a Church of the sixteenth century. The Church three hundred years ago may be likened to one of her cathedrals to-day. Churchmen are now restoring, as it is termed, these wondrous fabrics. Accumulated rubbish is taken away, buttresses are strengthened, unsightly plaster is scraped off and the grand carvings of the past age revealed. Every effort is made to complete the building according to the original design of the architect; but, for all that, no sane man would call the cathedral so restored a cathedral of the nineteenth century. Similarly a knowledge of the historical succession of the Church will save us from the absurdity of supposing that the Church, because it was repaired three centuries ago, was constructed at the same time that it was repaired. It should ever be remembered by Churchmen that the Reformation was not the beginning of a movement, but the happy end of one that had been going on for centuries. In its secular aspect it was the consummation of a long protracted struggle, the vindication of the supremacy of the King within his own realm over the pretensions of a foreign ecclesiastic. In its temporal as well as in its spiritual procedure the Reformation produced no breach in the continuity of the Church of England, and every constitutional historian would ridicule the idea of celebrating a tricentenary of Anglicanism, in the same sense as it is proposed to celebrate the centenary of Methodism. But it may be asked, what is the practical value of this continuity? Well, it does seem to me to be a practical, not a sentimental, feeling to be able to pray, "From heresy and schism good Lord deliver us," without feeling self-condemned, as all Englishmen must do who have left the National Church and yet pray against that deadly sin of schism. It is a satisfaction to know that as Churchmen we belong to the same household of faith not only as Latimer and Ridley, but as Wycliffe and Bede and Augustine. To us the interval of 1,500 years between St. Paul and the Reformation has attractions, and for us the deepest interest. Whatever we may think of the glories and triumphs of the last 800 years they cannot compare with those of the first 800 years of the Church's life, when the primitive Christians conquered the world by their lives and won heathendom to Christ, giving Him the heathen for His inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession. To all thoughtful Christians the 1,500 years that formed the lifetime of Christianity before the Reformation are not a chasm and a blank not worth filling up. He who had promised to be with His Church always, even to the end of the ages, had not forgotten to be gracious for 1,500 years. He had not slept in the ship nor allowed her to drift at the mercy of the boisterous waves of this troublesome world. The conclusion to be drawn from these considerations is that the Church needs some machinery whereby her members shall be taught that Church doctrine is Bible truth, and the only available machinery that I know of is the pulpit. Ignorance of what the Church really teaches has occasioned the loss of multitudes of members. It cannot be too forcibly insisted on that popular theology is seldom or never identical with standard theology. It was the great object of our Blessed Lord to teach that the popular beliefs of His day were not in harmony with the law and the prophets. Even in the primitive Church we find the same phenomenon. Dean Stanley, speaking of the evidence furnished by the Catacombs, said they differed widely from the representations of contemporaneous authors, and gave a striking example of the divergence that existed between the actual, living, popular belief, and that which was to be found in books. It has ever been so. The popular belief of the ordinary uneducated Romanist is not consistent with the decrees of the Council of Trent. Multitudes of Presbyterians and Methodists neither know nor regard a great deal to be found in the Westminster Confession and Wesley's