

In fact, the incidence and influence of tradition are and must be universal in every religious system which once reaches the number of two adherents; because, even if the founder of a new sect have really invented a fresh type of creed, which is seldom the case, his first convert accepts it on his authority, and begins a new chain of tradition; while those persons who believe themselves to draw their belief at first hand from the Bible are all but invariably under the influence of a large body of traditional interpretation, which they unconsciously read into the text. This is particularly exemplified by nearly every Evangelical communion at the present day which lays much stress on the doctrines of the Atonement and of Justification. That these doctrines are contained in some shape in the New Testament is unquestionable, but it is matter of historical fact that the particular forms they assume amongst the Salvation Army—to take a prominent example of the moment—were unknown till the sixteenth century, and made no part of the religious consciousness of ancient Christendom. Their modern adherents say, and say truly, that they find them in the Bible; but they find them, not because originally or really there, but as read into it under the influence of a powerful, though very late, tradition. And that of the separate bodies into which Christendom is the number of such traditions is as least as large as divided. One group of societies follows the tradition of Luther, another that of Calvin, a third that of Zwingli or Farel, a fourth that of Wesley, yet others those of Swedenborg or Irving. And the Roman Church has in appearance the most bulky traditional apparatus of any, because the paragraph in the Creed of Pius IV., which binds the Roman Catholic to acceptance of "the Apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions . . . of the same Church," covers the whole mass of Acts and Canons of the Councils, the whole growing series of Papal Bulls, briefs, and constitutions, the enactments of the Canon Law, and all the decrees of the Roman Congregations on points of faith, practice, and morals—a tolerably comprehensive catalogue, but utterly elusive, not merely by reason of its enormous bulk, making it inaccessible to all but a few industrious scholars, but because it can be and constantly is set aside, as observed above, in favour of any opinion or practice which finds favour with the "living voice of the Church," that is, the ecclesiastical authorities for the time being; as was comprehensively expressed by Pius IX. in his phrase: "Tradizione, son io."

Such being the state of the case, it is clear that the practical question for every Christian who desires to be at one in belief and in all important points of practice with the primitive Church, is what tradition shall he follow. He cannot escape some tradition, even if it be as new as the just revived Eusebian text of the Greek Testament. And after all, no canon is more satisfactory than that of Vincent of Lerins in the fifth century—"That which has been handed down everywhere, always, and by all."

It has been objected with much plausibility against this maxim that, even if its theoretical adequacy be granted, it is impossible of application, because no such entire universality of agreement in fact attaches to any tenet or usage amongst Christians. But the greater part of the current variations disappear when we limit the word "always" to the period between the foundation of Christianity and the first enunciation of the maxim itself; which is of course what Vincent intended. Nor can we suppose him to have been ignorant of so broad a fact in Church history as the long conflict with Arianism, for example, which attests the non-universality of Trinitarian doctrine in Christendom; so that a metaphysical exactness of interpretation is not to be put on his canon in order to discredit it.

Its real force and character will appear by comparing it with what is its almost exact analogue in English jurisprudence. Side by side with the Statute Book, which may be termed the legal Bible, there is another code known as the "Common Law," which does not rest for its sanction on any statutes now extant, but on long usage recognised by judicial decisions. In order that any claim to come under the head of common law may be established, it is necessary that it should fulfil these conditions: (1) It must not be merely local custom or usage, such, for example, as gavelkind, which is confined to the county of Kent; (2) It must be legally "immemorial," that is, at least as early as the reign of Richard I.; (3) It must have been recognised in all Courts of the realm when pleaded in them. Any one can see that this is a perfect workable principle, though it would be easy to raise cavilling objections to the ideally perfect fulfilment of all the conditions (as, for instance the very existence of gavelkind in Kent is incompatible with the perfect universality of any other mode of dividing property); and a little thought will show that the same qualities of wide dispersiveness as against local prevalence; continuity of tenure as against late introduction or broken prescription; and acceptance in the synods and dioceses of Christendom generally as against such challenge and resistance as image-wor-

ship, say, or the tenet of the Immaculate Conception encountered when first formulated, may be seen to hold good of no inconsiderable body of Christian tenets and usages. Such a historical tradition as this serves as the best safeguard of the Faith; and its own securest shrine is the liturgical literature of any Church, so long as it is free from later accretions; so true is it that "Lex grandis est lex credendi."

RICHARD F. LITTLEDALE.

EXTRACTS FROM A SERMON.

PREACHED BY REV. C. H. MOCKRIDGE, D.D., IN ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, TORONTO, AND CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, HAMPTON, ON BEHALF OF THE SISTERHOOD OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE, TORONTO.

The Rev. Dr. Mockridge selected as his text "She hath done what she could."—St. Mark xiv. 8. The reverend preacher defended the course he was pursuing in addressing one sex, by alluding to the custom of sermons being delivered to special classes. He then proceeded warmly to eulogize the work of women in the Church, and showed how the lot of woman had been raised and sanctified by Christianity. From this he proceeded to argue that the sphere of woman in the home and Church was different from man's, arising from the respective powers and capacities and tastes of the sexes being so differentiated as to render them complementary to each other, and equally valuable in the work of Christ.

Coming now to his subject, Dr. Mockridge said as follows: "Christian women, we must depend upon you to a great extent for carrying on the work of Christ. There are duties connected with it that you are by nature adapted for. Teaching in Sunday-school is one of these, caring for the sick and unfortunate women is another, nursing the sick and helping the working classes when they are in trouble, is another; ministering to those that are always praying for—those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity," is another. If we pray, let us work.

How then shall women set about doing that for which they are so well fitted? In the first place there must be the inner consecration to God. There must be the desire to work, because it is working for Christ. What a priceless thing it is to have the heart, the wish, the desire to do good. There are people who do good under the lash of duty. They see that certain things ought to be done, that it is reasonable that they should be done, and they goad themselves on to the doing of them. But have you to goad the young woman on to attend places of public amusement? Have you to urge her to buy extravagant dress, and to adorn herself with costly attire? No, the desire is there. The first thing wanted then, is the life given to God. That should be the true adornment of woman—"Whose adorning," says St. Paul, "let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, and of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit; which is, in the sight of God, of great price."

You notice this—the more a woman cares for God, the less she cares for dress and outward show; the more nearly she approaches to what her Lord would have her to be, the more retiring and womanly she becomes, for it is not womanly to be perpetually seeking excitement and public admiration.

Of course there are women closely tied by domestic duties. All right. That is their place. The true mother is one that watches her children the closest. She sleeps only when they sleep; she rejoices only when they rejoice. From them small duties will be expected. All that Christ wishes to say of any woman is, "She hath done what she could." But there are women who have a great deal of money and time at their disposal. Give such the inner consecration to God, and oh! what they could do for Him!

But in connection with what you can do for God, all thinking Churchmen must see that we are making a great mistake in not systematizing woman's work. We want some consecrated order of women to do work. I do not see why a consecrated order of women should be any more dangerous than a consecrated order of men. Yet I belong to a consecrated order of men, and all Christian ministers belong to the same. They are set apart to do God's work. We know them by their work; we know them by their very dress. It is a good thing that they are known in this way. Their constant appearance in public, in itself reminds men of their work. Why should it not be so with women? We have women who are poets, and authors and artists. They can take their place side by side with men in the very highest walks of life, why should they not have their consecrated order to do Christ's work as men do it, not out of their sphere, but in their sphere, men doing what men are qualified to do, and women doing what women are qualified to do?

We are, indeed, making a mistake that we have, in this country, no such order as this. People who live in their own comfortable, perhaps, luxurious homes, who never go down amongst the distressed and the poor, may belittle such a work as this; but those who know what it is to see the distress which every now and then comes upon the working classes and the poor, must feel how valuable it would be. Not long ago a man came to bury his oldest boy; soon after he came with the same request for his second boy. Last Sunday a woman came to tell me that the poor fellow's wife had died of a broken heart, and that there was no one to help him in any way in the house, except the neighbours. She said, "We will help him (she was a Roman Catholic) if you will let us, and our sisters will take the children—six of them—to their own homes ready for the purpose, and bring them up with every watchful care." In the face of this I felt so utterly helpless that I was much impressed by it. And, of course, similar events are occurring all the time.

If there are thousands of women idle in our churches to day, it is because the Church will not give them proper systematic work to do. To be plain, we want an order something like the Sisters of Charity in the Church of Rome. Whatever the particular appointments or details may be, we want some such order. All denominations are beginning to feel the want of some such organization. We may have our Young Women's Associations and Ladies' Aid Societies, but they stand in the relation to women consecrated to a life work with nothing to do but that) as laymen do to clergymen, or as volunteers to regulars.

To show the need that is felt of this, let me quote the words of an eminent Methodist minister, of the United States. Speaking of the Sisters of Charity, he says: "Claiming to be intensely loyal to Protestantism, we stand in this presence of Protestants and say that this vast association of unmarried ladies, uniformed (the better to protect them from insult, and introduce them in their official character) has performed a long continued and eminently self-sacrificing work that should win the encomiums of every candid admirer of womanly heroism. For three centuries, in every land over which bends heaven's arch, they have coveted the repulsive labor of nursing the sick in hospitals, regardless of their faith, rank, nationality, poverty or disease. Eternity alone will develop what these consecrated persons have accomplished in the alleviation of human distress."

These are brave, true words; and, considering the source from which they come, striking and suggestive. Our good old Church in the motherland has been speaking and acting on the sentiments contained in them for many years. It is a movement which we hope soon to have established in our own country. We need some such consecrated order of women, and the movement to establish a sisterhood with this end in view, will receive, so far as it goes, my hearty co-operation and support.

* From a sermon preached by S. V. Leech, D.D., in the M.E. Church, before the Women's Christian Association in Frederick City, Md.

BOOK NOTICES.

CATALOGUES BY THOS. BAKER, 20 GOSWELL ROAD, LONDON, E.C. ENGLAND.—The catalogue contains as good a representative collection of English and Foreign theology as it is well possible to get together. The contents consist of between 1,100 and 1,200 articles, comprising a collection of Biblical, Patristic, Mediaeval and Reformation Literature, Old-Anglican Puritan and Non-conformist Theology of every description by authors of the Greek, Roman, English and various other Churches from the Apostolic times to the present day. Books ranging from the raw productions of the early printers, Aldus, Plantin, Froben, Stephanus, Day and others, down to the latest modern publications. It is a valuable book of reference to all interested in the great department of literature of which it treats.

Home & Foreign Church News.

From our own Correspondents.

DOMINION.

QUEBEC.

SHERBROOKE.—St. Peter's Church.—It is gratifying to learn that the Rev. J. Buxton Smith, assistant minister at Christ Church, Ottawa, has accepted the nomination of the Bishop to the rectorship of St. Peter's Church in this city. He will enter upon his duties at Easter next. The congregation of St. Peter's Church is a large and wealthy one, and ever