

reading it awhile, he knelt down and began to pray; and then the young infidel began to pull off his coat and get ready for bed. The uncle said "I thought you were going to sit up and watch." But the young man knew there was no need of sitting up, pistol in hand, to watch all night long in a cabin that was hallowed by the word of God, and consecrated by the voice of prayer. Would a pack of cards, a rum bottle, or a copy of the *Age of Reason*, have thus quieted this young infidel's fears?

Every one knows that where this book has influence it makes things safe. Why is this? If it were a bad book, we should expect to find it in the hands of the worst men. In New York there was once a kind of rogue's museum—a place where they had all kinds of skeleton-keys, and jimmies, and brass knuckles, and dirks, and pistols, and implements of mischief, which they had taken away from roughs and criminals. Do you suppose there was a single New Testament in the whole kit? Why not? If it were a bad book you would expect a man to have a revolver in one pocket, and a New Testament tucked away in another. There was a row the other night, and a man broke his wife's head with a—Bible? No! it was a bottle! Where the Bible bears sway, the rows and quarrels do not come.

What makes this book so different from all other books? Whose book is it? Who made it? Infidels have the strangest ideas on that subject. I recollect in Marlboro, Mass., I read in a newspaper an article written by an infidel, which stated that the Council of Nice, in the year 325, compiled the New Testament. They had a lot of Gospels and Epistles, genuine and spurious, and no one could distinguish between the two; so they put them all on the floor, and prayed that the good ones might get up on the communion table and the bad ones stay on the floor; and that was the way that the present New Testament was compiled. And that is the kind of food that infidels are made to swallow and digest; for that very statement can be found in various infidel books now issued by infidel publishers. This writer said that this account rested on the authority of Papias, an early Christian bishop. I replied, in a lecture, that there was one difficulty about that story—that Papias was dead and buried a hundred and fifty years before the Council of Nice was held; but as they might have got the news from "the spirits," that might be no great objection to them. The man rose to explain, and said that this was not the right Papias, but that it was another Papias, "an obscure Christian bishop of the fourth century." I told him I thought he was obscure; so obscure that no one ever heard of him before or since. On investigation it was learned that a German dominie, named John Pappus, preacher in Strasburg, and a professor at Munster, who died in 1610, discovered this story in an old Greek manuscript entitled "Synodikon," which was written by some old romancer back in the dark ages, about the year 900, for it relates things which occurred as late as 879, over five hundred years after the Council of Nice. And this story, written nobody knows when, where, or by whom, has been swallowed, believed, and published by infidels far and near, as an account of the origin of the New Testament; and the men who believe and peddle such fables call Christians fools for believing the Bible.

(To be Continued.)

THE ABIDING PRESENCE OF THE COMFORTER.

"I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever."—St. John, xiv. 16.

This day we thank God for the fulfilment of that promise. What a cheering word it was for the Apostles, who were so soon to lose their Divine Friend! What an instructive word it is for us, who need Divine help every hour of our lives!

What must it have been to those earliest disciples to know that he had been such a Guide and Master to them, was going to die on the morrow—to know that, though He should rise again the third day, He would leave them very soon, ascending up where He was before? But then He told

them that another Comforter would come to them instead—another Comforter also from Heaven, another Comforter sent like Himself by the Father. And this Comforter was not merely to stay with them for some few years as He had done, but to abide with them for ever. He would give them grace and counsel for their own souls. He would enable them to teach others the truth. He would carry forward, when they died, that truth which they loved. He would complete, from one generation to another, the great and blessed work of the Son of God.

And for ourselves too, what light and peace, what consolation and encouragement, are offered here! And how much we have to answer for in the gifts here foretold and actually granted to us!

1. First, it is an unspeakable blessing to have the Spirit of Truth in the midst of us. For this gracious Spirit is our Advocate—one whom we can always summon to our aid. He is always with the Church. He joins men to the Church, age after age, year after year, for by One Spirit are we all baptized into One Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles (1 Cor. xii, 13). He strengthens us in "the laying on of hands," which is among the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and therefore continues all the same (Heb. vi, 1, 2; Acts xix, 6). He stirs us up to pray, and enables us to pray aright (Rom. viii, 26). He bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God (verse 16). He, if we will but ask for His assistance, will strengthen us in all temptations, guide us through all difficulties, comfort us in all sorrows. He, if we only go on seeking Him, will make us thoroughly holy. We need never say, I cannot endure this affliction; for He can make us endure to the end. We must never think, I cannot become like the saints; for He can make us "perfect, even as our Father which is in Heaven is perfect."

2. But then all this shows us, that in this promise of Christ we have a call to faith. For this Holy Ghost is invisible. He has not a body as our Lord had. He can only be "spiritually discerned." He is One "whom the world cannot receive," for this very reason, "because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him." But the true disciples know Him, for He dwelleth with them and is in them. And it may be just the same for you when you are cast down, faith will show you the uplifting Spirit—when you are exceeding sorrowful, faith will make the Comforter's presence very real to you, and very near—when you long for the word and power of Christ, faith will remind you that He promised not to leave you orphans, and that the other Comforter is with you quite as truly as if Christ was walking by your side. But when Christ does come back, will He find such faith in you—will He see that you have indeed believed that word of His, and regarded your very body as a "temple of the Holy Ghost?"

3. If not, if you live in daily forgetfulness of that promise, or in wilful disobedience to this Spirit, there is a terrible warning for you in this saying of our Lord as to the Comforter's presence. The presence of the Comforter may be close to you, and yet not your own:—

"It fills the Church of God, it fills
The sinful world around;
Only in stubborn hearts and wills
No place for it is found."

Therefore try, above all things, to make a good use of this priceless gift. "Grieve not the Spirit" by going on in the lusts of your flesh, or the pride of your heart. "Quench not the Spirit" by resisting His grace which is within you, or by going from Him into the darkness. Rather, be praying always in the Spirit, knowing that He is as near to you as the air you breathe, and that He can lift your humble desires, your fervent petitions, to God in Heaven. God has already granted you life in the Spirit, for the Spirit is the very Giver of life; and so strive to walk in the Spirit. Where He is guide no ill can come. Where He is Comforter no grief can overwhelm us. Ask Him, who always abides with the Church, to abide always with you; and then you will understand the great difference between living for the world and living for the Lord; for the love of God will be shed abroad in your heart, by the Holy Ghost which is given to you, and you will rejoice evermore in His holy comfort.—S. P. C. K.

HER MAJESTY, QUEEN VICTORIA—MARRIAGE AND HOME LIFE.

Two years after her Coronation the Queen was married to her cousin, Prince Albert, of Saxe-Cobourg, to whom she had always been warmly attached. The wedding took place in the Chapel Royal, St. James's, on February 10th, 1840. It was a cold wet morning; but the multitude stood outside waiting patiently for a glimpse of the young bride and her husband. As she came forth smiling and radiant in her simple adornment of orange flowers, her long veil floating down behind, the sun broke out overhead and the "Queen's weather" asserted itself, while loud cheers burst forth from the assembled crowd. It was truly no mere conventional ceremony, this royal wedding, but the union of two loving hearts; and no happier marriage, perhaps, has ever taken place.

The bridal cake was of gigantic size. It was three yards round, fourteen inches deep, and three hundred pounds in weight, and was surmounted by a figure of Britannia. After the wedding breakfast, the royal pair drove from London to Windsor. The Queen wore a white satin pelisse trimmed with swansdown, and a white bonnet with feathers; and the Prince appeared in a handsome fur-trimmed coat. They were received with great enthusiasm at Windsor, the Eton boys following the carriage with their hearty cheers up to the castle gates. All over England high festival was held that day. In London the theatres were thrown open free of charge to the public; and at Drury Lane, a special entertainment was prepared, at the close of which the National Anthem was sung, and a representation of the Royal Couple was shown surrounded by a grand display of fireworks.

A happy time of peace and domestic affection now began at Windsor Castle; and whatever difficulties arose in connection with the government of this great kingdom, the Queen had always her husband by her side to give her help and counsel. The Prince indeed was still young. But he had an excellent education and was endowed with a sound judgment; and as soon as he was settled at Windsor, he set to work to master the details of the English law and Constitution, under the guidance of Mr. Selwyn, an eminent barrister. It was a period of great poverty and distress in England; and the question how to feed a starving multitude was even more difficult than it is now. The people clamoured to have the tax removed from foreign corn; and until this was done, bread riots were constantly taking place. In Ireland, too, rebellious meetings were held, demanding Home Rule and self-government; while in India perpetual troubles arose. So that, altogether, it was no easy task for the young Queen to govern her extensive kingdom.

An extract from her "Journal" will give a good idea how the days were passed at Windsor. "They breakfasted at nine, and took a walk afterwards. Then came the usual business of State; after which they drew and etched together. Luncheon followed at two o'clock. In the afternoon the Prime Minister arrived; and between five and six the Prince drove the Queen out in a phaeton, or sometimes he rode while the Queen drove out with the Duchess of Kent or her ladies. After this he read aloud to her every day. Dinner was at eight o'clock; and sometimes there was dancing afterwards. But late hours were avoided at the Castle, the party usually breaking up at eleven o'clock."

The Prince soon came forward as the patron of the fine arts, and the upholder of many charitable works in London. His first English speech was made at a meeting for the abolition of slavery; and he promoted the advancement of education among the people with all his heart and soul. That they might help the poor in their distress, the royal pair set a noble example by reforming their own household, and regulating their private expenditure with the strictest economy. Thus the home life of the Castle became a model of all that was unselfish and pure and good: and the sentiment of loyalty, possessed by the nation on the Queen's Accession to the throne, gradually deepened into a feeling of sincere personal admiration and of affectionate attachment.

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