

TRUSTFULNESS.

(From a Sermon by the Bishop of Lincoln)

"Storms have arisen," "and waves have broken over the bark of the Church again and again. And He has seemed to men to be asleep; and the faithless have forsaken her, and even at times the faithful have feared. But again and again He has arisen and reproved the faithlessness of His followers, and rebuked the sea and the wind; the storm has ceased, and the Church has continued safer than before. This has been true in our day, in our branch of the Church Catholic, the Church of England. We have seen some storms in our day: we have also seen the storms to cease and the waves made still. The doctrine of Regeneration by Baptism we have seen attacked, and left apparently an open question; but never has the doctrine been more universally taught in the Church of England, or Baptism more reverently administered, than it is at the present day. The great Sacrament of the altar has been assailed, and the expression of its true doctrine hindered; but never for the last three hundred years have there been so many celebrations of the Holy Communion offered or so many Communions made as now. The Easter Communions are indeed in many places marvellous in our eyes. The keeping of Ascension Day is becoming general; and a weekly celebration in all our churches will, I hope and pray, if we but continue faithful, ere long be the rule. The doctrine and practice of Confession and Absolution have been misrepresented and reviled; and yet it is increasingly acknowledged by all candid persons to be the doctrine and practice enjoined by the Prayer Book of our Church; and when taught and practised, as the *Prayer Book* directs, with the full liberty and freedom of the ancient Church, we know it to be fraught with blessings which no storm which this world could raise would ever make us surrender. The Holy Scriptures themselves we have seen attacked from almost every side; but again and again the storm has been made to cease. The attacks of modern criticism have but increased our confidence; and the present passing cloud which has made some—not unreasonably—anxious, will, I trust, end in a more careful and real use of the Old Testament, as undoubtedly the book which God has caused to be written for our learning, as our home in heaven, possessing information and authority such as none other book possesses. This threatening storm, we believe; will also be made to cease if we are careful to maintain that attitude of prayerful, patient consideration which so mysterious a subject as God's revelation to man reasonably demands. These things, brethren beloved, we have seen in our day. They make us repeat the lesson of the Magdalene's life—"He maketh the storm, and the waves thereof, to be still."

"An increased trustfulness, then, it seems to me, should be what we should strive to gain. We have seen enough not to fear. He maketh the storm to cease, and the waves thereof to be still. Quietness and peace, continuing to do our duty simply and humbly, and undisturbedly, an air of trustfulness, an appearance of untroubled tranquility—this is one of the results which should follow upon pondering the events of the past. And with it a peculiar sense of security—not in our own strength—but because we have had the assurance of the presence of Christ still with us in His Church. A sense of security that the Church is His covenanted way of salvation, that there we are, as it were, in Paradise again, and there we are to rest. It is God's creation, God's plan, not man's, and God's power is still in it; and, therefore, with this trustfulness there should be an increased sense of security."—*Living Church*,

THE LUX MUNDI CRITICISM.

BY THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE.

The theological atmosphere of the Church has been of late much disturbed by a new phase of controversy. Certain writers seem to think that there is no harm in accusing a man who lived three or four thousand years ago of roguery, or in starting a theory, on very slight provocation, which involves generations of men in conscious deceit and upsets the whole belief of a nation concerning its own history; the tone of such writers is to me, I confess, painfully offensive, but so it is, and we must take the writers as we find them; what I wish to impress upon you is that we may feel confident that the whole question will be worked out in the end. Meanwhile, in quietness and confidence will be our strength; if the Old Testament be what the Church believes it to be, the first volume of the Word of God, then we may be sure that God will vindicate His own, and that we shall ultimately know the truth, and that the truth will make us free.

We must not allow our minds to be drawn away too much by controversy concerning the Old Testament, from the perception of the truth that our faith and hope are bound up much more with the New Testament than with the Old, that Moses and the Prophets are chiefly precious to us as leading us up to Christ. When Moses and Elijah and Christ appeared in glory together upon the Mount of Transfiguration to the three favored disciples, the type of the Christian Church, the figure of the Incarnate Lord, was the true centre of the scene; the other two were visions of the past, shadows called forth out of the deep of ancient time to do homage to, and prove their oneness with the Messenger of the new covenant, the Incarnate Lord; they performed their part in the mysterious scene, and then vanished away, leaving Christ alone in all the reality of His personal presence. And so the Church has been taught that rests upon Christ, in a manner which can be predicated of no other foundation. She rests upon Moses; she rests upon Apostles and Prophets; but Jesus Christ alone, in His Divine and human nature is the head Cornerstone. I pray you to consider and to believe that the eternal stability of this Cornerstone cannot be affected by any controversy concerning the Old Testament—its history, its contents, its various authorship. Interesting as the questions are which have been raised of late, necessary as it is that they should be investigated, honest and open-minded as we ought to be with regard to accepting results which have been reasonably proved, we may hold that the subject to which such questions belong is but of trifling importance as compared with the great truths which constitute the Christian creed.

In this persuasion, let us continue in the practical and blessed work of endeavoring to win souls for God. The truths which you and I have to teach our people are still truths—nay, the greatest and best of truths—whatever may be the last word that criticism has to say concerning the problems which the Old Testament raises. We may have to abandon opinions which have been generally held by educated men, or we may find opinions which are just now assailed established upon a basis firmer than any which they could claim in the less critical times which have gone by; but which ever be the result, we need not fear concerning our faith in Him to Whom Old Testament and New in their respective manners and degree equally bear witness, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to day and for ever."—*Charge*.

THE HOLY COMMUNION.

There are one or two points in connection with the celebration of this Holy Sacrament amongst us, which need to be emphasized. They

relate to the preparation of the elements and the reception of them. Very frequently it is found that the bread for the Sacrament is already out and broken into a great number of small pieces, when it is placed upon the Holy Table. But this utterly prevents the Minister from doing what the Prayer Book bids him do—take the bread into his hands at the proper point in the service. It destroys another part of the true symbolism of the Sacrament, too, "the one bread" partaken of by all, expressing the blessed truth of the spiritual unity of Christians. The best way to prepare the bread for the Sacrament is by means of a "bread cutter," a simple little device which can be had from any ecclesiastical furnisher, which enables you to cut the bread into blocks of uniform size and thickness, and half into a uniform number of pieces, which can then be easily broken, as one of the manual parts of the consecration, and as easily into smaller parts for the administration. This arrangement also enables the celebrant to calculate instantly just how much of his prepared bread he will want for his communicants present. These bread cutters cost but a trifle, but they are very useful.

A second point is a wide spread custom of receiving the consecrated bread with the tips of the fingers (often gloved) instead of into the open palm of the ungloved hand. The latter method will be found to be far more comfortable, both for the Clergyman and the Communicant, besides being more reverent. This has nothing to do with doctrinal questions about the consecrated elements, nor with any superstitious treatment of them. No right-minded Communicant can help feeling reverence for, and wanting to handle reverently, the consecrated symbols. And it is not reverent to pick at them with the tips of the fingers, and then in carrying the bread to the mouth, scatter half of it carelessly upon the floor. "Let all things be done decently and in order." Receive the consecrated bread in the palm of the hand.—*The Church Worker*.

RAISON D'ETRE.

The Church must be united. In St. John xvii, 20 21, it thus reads: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; and they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

"All may be one, but are divided and hostile as possible under enlightenment.

Many religious people, seeing the humiliating dilemma, vainly trying to prove a union; but every scoffer sees the disunion and bitterness so plainly, that he does not hesitate to use it as a conceded fact, in condemning Christianity. There is no plain scripture reconciliation.

The same scoffer gloats when he reads the closing sentence "That the world may believe that thou hast sent me;" and then says, "Christ was not sent of God, if all denominations are Church."

The only frank escape is to say, "Only one is Church—the rest are out off (sects) and not recognized by St. Paul as Church." 1 John II, 18 19.

"Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that Anti Christ shall come, even now there be many Anti-Christ.

They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

No one doubts that "us" meant Church. Paul recognized the practice of secession, and freely denounced it.

Sectarianism scours land and sea in the futile effort to reconcile its absurd status.

Church abides by the plain Scripture.
—R. P. K., in *Kansas Churchman*.