

the mind of man would be of the same order as the mind of God.

But the mind of a man and the mind of a child are of the same order. Multiply the mind of a child, not by infinity, but by a finite quantity; in other words, give him the common experience which comes with growth and it becomes the mind of a man; multiply again the mind of a man by a finite quantity by giving him the opportunities for special research and development, and it may become the mind of a wiser man, but it still will remain a magnitude of the very same order as the mind of a child. Here, if you please, is a *Natural law* which will hold in the spiritual world, which some others will not. Strive as he will, the experience of a man can be no more than finite, his mind of itself can approach no nearer to God than an infinite distance from Him. Let him study as he will, comprehend all human knowledge, if he can, in his grasp,—all the sciences and all the "ologies,"—and the wisdom resulting is not in the order of its magnitude separated from the simplicity and ignorance of the child. We may write the ratio thus: The mind of a child is the mind of a man, as one is to two; but the mind of man is to the mind of God, as one to infinity. If we draw a moral from this, we must say, "Some of the truths of revelation are beyond man's comprehension, and all are beyond his criticism." Yet, if God had given us a Bible without difficulty, man would reject it, arguing thus, "If this infinite subject had been treated by an infinite Author, it would have contained difficulties for my finite mind." But, as God has given it to us, the Bible does contain difficulties, and man makes this fact the excuse for his unbelief.

Now all this, of course, does not argue the point whether God is the author of the Scriptures or not. It simply shows that, if a man has so believed, he need not abandon his position because God has given him a mind. But a word to the Catholic. You may see that all Old Testament prophecy points forward to Christ, or you may be blind to this fact; you may be able to reconcile apparent discrepancies in the Gospel narratives, or you may not; you may find in the contemporary Assyrian monuments agreement or disagreement with the sacred text; but the one final argument for you is that the Scriptures are given you by that Church against which the gates of hell shall never prevail. Believe the Holy Scriptures you must if you believe the Church; and if you take the gift you must take it as given. Some are urging to-day that the Church has not defined the true theory of inspiration, but they can find no shelter behind such sophistry as this; for the Church has ever held, what is much more important, that as the Holy Scriptures came from their writers they contained nothing but truth.

In each age of Christianity there is some one principle more than another which a Catholic must stand for. It is always a principle which is opposed to the spirit of the age, and which takes from him the support and the sympathy of the world. It may be a principle he is unable successfully to defend against the great ones who oppose it. If so, it becomes his cross, which he must not refuse to carry. The life of the Son of Man is a continual Way of the Cross. In each age He is arraigned at the bar of the world and is sentenced to die, because He utters no word in His own defense. "Behold how many things they witness against Thee. And Jesus yet answered nothing." Again and again the world has buried the Nazarene and His doctrine, only to find that it has planted a seed which will cover the earth.—*The Arrow*, N. Y.

The only way to regenerate the world is to do the duty which lies nearest to us, and not to hunt after grand, far-fetched ones for ourselves.—*Charles Kingsley*.

## A Paper

ON

### "THE NECESSITY OF DISTINCTIVE CHURCH TEACHING,"

Read by W. J. Imlach, Esq., at the Meeting of the Middlesex Sunday-School Association, held in the City of London, on Jan. 9th, 1894.

MR. PRESIDENT,—At your request, and being desirous of assisting at these Deanery and S. S. Association meetings, have consented to read a paper and have chosen for my subject, "The Necessity of Distinctive Church Teaching," believing as I do that there never has been more need of such teaching in our Church than in the present so-called enlightened 19th century, in which it is imperative that the Church should speak out fearlessly, and that with no uncertain sound; for while we have not to contend with a Babel of languages, we have to contend with what is far worse a Babel of Religions. For the United States' census reveals the astounding fact that there are no less than 200 distinct religious bodies with divisions and subdivisions among the older sects, and numerous new devices for the formation of so-called churches, all claiming the Bible as their foundation and authority for their strange creed and doctrines, and all claiming that theirs is the true church. Look also at the Babel of religions as held at the World's Fair in Chicago, thus bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the level of heathendom. The Rev. Dr. Morgan Dix, of New York, says on this parliament of religions, "without impugning the motives of its promoters, that it was a masterpiece of Satanic ingenuity, the baneful influence of which could not be over estimated." Surely all this Babel of religions is the rending of the Body of Christ afresh, for God never could have intended such, as he is a God of order and not of confusion, as witnessed by His revealed Gospel in the New Testament, through his divinely appointed and inspired Apostles. Knowing and believing that the Church and only true Church was established on earth by these Apostles, surely then it is the duty of a Branch of this Catholic Church if she desires to perpetuate these truths to be "clear and distinctive in her teaching." For truth to be the truth cannot be tainted with what is not true, or it loses its truthfulness. So in religion anything that deviates from the government or doctrines of the true revealed religion of Jesus Christ, as made manifest through the inspired Apostles in the New Testament cannot be real and is, therefore, untrue; then is it not high time for Churchmen, lay as well as clerical, to speak out for Christ and His Holy Church by plain and distinctive teachings? For have we not in this 19th century the same creeds, sacraments and teachings of Apostolic days, with one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism." This Church, of which we are privileged members by this baptism, may truly boast that she has been the custodian of these Holy mysteries and brought them down to our days unimpaired. Nor in all these centuries has she deviated from or added one iota to these creeds and sacraments, and surely if they are to be handed down as pure as we have received them, to our children's children, it can only be done by distinctive teachings and precepts. Is the Church of God not a living organism, born on the day of Pentecost, filled with the spirit of God, crowned by the blessed sacraments, and sent forth to conquer the world? The Church is no aggregation of voluntary societies, man made and man inspired. For on this day alone we read of 3,000 being added to the Church by baptism; it was twelve years after this Pentecost before the first Gospel was written, and during those twelve years the Church was in full operation in Judea,

Asia Minor and Rome. This is to say that the Church, which according to this latter day wisdom was guided in its organization by the Bible, had started off in its organic career, without waiting for a line of the Christian Scriptures, which were the outcome of this Apostolic Church, and which grew and made conquests such as are unknown in these days, for sixty years before either the Gospels or the Apostolic writings were completed. We may add this fact to the foregoing that it was not for some centuries fully decided by the early Church that even all these words were canonical, or possessed of divine authority, and this decision was rendered by this very Church sitting in judgment on their merits, as the proper expounder and arbiter of Holy Writ; thus the Bible depends for its authority on the Church, and which is accepted by all denominations as a true version of Holy Writ, given to them through the Catholic Church. This is not to claim infallibility for any branch of the Church in any age. It simply affirms that our trust in the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God must rest upon the witness of the Church. Our branch of the Catholic Church affirms this principle in her "Sixth Article of Religion," as accepting these canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church." I have simply introduced this part of my subject to endeavor to show the vast importance of this Apostolic Church that has given to the world the blessings of an inspired New Testament as the guide and practice for God's Church militant on earth—and assuredly requires the distinctive teaching that I am here advocating.

Before coming to the main object of this paper, Sunday-school work, I will refer to a few examples only of the distinct teachings on religion so fully revealed in both the Old and New Testament. From the former we learn how God chose one nation out of the world to be the keeper of His Holy Word, and to preserve the true faith amidst heathens; only by belonging to this nation could any one enter into direct covenant with God's Church on earth. Beginning with Abraham how distinct were God's instructions as to initiation of membership into his covenant, (corresponding with our baptism.) Moses, again; nearly the whole of one of his books is taken up with most distinct details of the law and commandments, received direct from God himself on Mount Sinai—even to every detail of the construction of the Tabernacle and vessels to be used therein. It was not enough for men of other nations, who desired to serve God to take out of the Jewish system what suited them and leave the rest; they had to take all or none and become a part of that people. Not so with the sects in these days: we know the fate of Korah, Dathan and Abiram for trying to create a schism in the Jewish Church.

Joshua, again, after he had led the hosts of Israel over Jordan, and by order of God set up the twelve stones as a memorial of God's mercies, said to the people, when your children ask their fathers what mean ye by these stones—ye shall answer them (as he described). What an example for us in this day, that we too should be able to give our children the answer, showing them what God hath done for us under the light and life of the glorious Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The New Testament is fuller yet in distinct teachings and denouncing all error and new fables and doctrines—just two quotations from St. Paul's Epistles will suffice—to the Corinthians he beseeches them, that ye all speak the same thing, that there be no divisions among you, see I. Cor. 11, 12, 14 vs. Then, again, to the Galatians, how strongly he denounces those who would preach or receive any other gospel than he had preached to them—surely all clear and distinct enough.