

ton, N. B., and his chaplains bearing the pastoral staff and the crozier, led the way, followed by the lay and clerical delegates, deacons, canons and other dignitaries of the Church. Among those noticed in the procession, which presented a very imposing appearance, were Bishop Kingdon, co-adjutor Bishop of Fredericton, the Bishops of Ontario, Montreal, Toronto, Nova Scotia and Algoma, Bishop Lay, of Easton, Maryland, Bishop Jagger, of Southern Ohio, and others. The procession entered the church to the singing of "One Hope of Your Calling." Dr. Davies officiating at the organ.

The services consisted of choral litany, Bishop Kingdon officiating; a hymn, the commandments, read by His Lordship the Metropolitan; the epistle, read by the Bishop of Montreal; and the gospel, read by the Bishop of Nova Scotia, and a hymn.

The Right Rev. Bishop Lay, of Easton, Maryland, then delivered the following

#### INTRODUCTORY SERMON.

The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.—John xiv : 26.

I am permitted to-day by the invitation of your Metropolitan, Right Reverend Fathers, Reverend Brethren, and Brethren of the household of faith, to speak to you of the things concerning the Kingdom of God.

And surely no theme can be more congruous with the occasion than that suggested in the text: no truth more profitable to be iterated in the intercommunion of sister churches, than this familiar one, that the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Life-giver, is ever present to preside alike over our consultations and our active ministrations.

Were it not for this conviction that a personal comforter, the eternal spirit of wisdom is as really present in humbler synods as in the first council at Jerusalem, or in the great councils which formulated the articles of the faith, or in the conferences of the Anglican Reformers who elaborated our inestimable prayer book; were we not bold to cry, where is the Lord God of Elijah and of Paul and of Athanasius, and of the Anglican doctors, then indeed we unworthy ones who are set to guide the religious thought and activities of this western world, might well shudder at so great a responsibility and say as Moses: "O Lord send by the hand of him whom Thou now wilt send."

Our social and ecclesiastical conditions are unlike those of the days gone by. We seem to need the Pentecostal gift of tongues to reach the men of many nationalities, the aborigines and the immigrants. In the separation of Church and State which throughout most of the Christian era had been in a close alliance, we are thrown back upon the voluntary offering of the faithful for the support and extension of the Church, and our hearts are ready to break sometimes because we seem to be losing our power of mission. No money is laid at the feet of the apostles, to be dispensed with reference to the greatest good of the greatest number. After the utmost endeavor of our missionary societies, we seem little able to send the Gospel save to those who can defray the costs of its ministrations.

We are confronted with an unbelief of singular audacity, penetrating all popular literature and infecting even the illiterate. Time was, within the ministry of many among ourselves, when the Christian and the unbeliever could before they parted asunder, join hands and say one fragment of the creed together:—I believe in God the Father Almighty. But now alas! Infidelity has become Atheism pure and simple, or else utters the language of contemptuous agnosticism.

Neither may we shut our eyes to the increase of practical irreligion and indifference. Copies of the bible are multiplied, but it enters less and less into the popular reading. Churches and meeting-houses stand in rivalry in every village or at every cross-road, but church going is more and more neglected. What revolt is there against the restraints of Sunday rest from traffic and travel, against the indissolubleness of the marriage bond?

How is disbelief in any life after death evidenced by the vast increase of murder and suicide?

Brethren, I am no pessimist. I have not a doubt or a fear as to the ultimate issue.

I am not insensible to the many tokens of God's favor and blessing in the wonderful religious activities of the day, in the growth of our own communion in the land, and in the examples of self sacrifice and saintliness already inscribed in the comparatively brief annals of your church and of our own.

You will pardon me then, if I urge upon you my own profound conviction that while we devoutly recognize the mercies of the past, and hopefully anticipate the hastening of Christ's Kingdom; for all this, never in the history of particular or national churches, never has a graver responsibility rested on men than now rests upon ourselves. Never have the bishops and priests to whom is entrusted in various measure, the oversight of the flock, never have deacons and laymen entrusted with the service or the legislation of the

church, had greater need than we, of prudent forecast and of heaven-inspired wisdom.

Or to be more definite: to express more distinctly the thought which came to me when I first knew that I was to address this venerable Synod. I believe the times demand that we American churchmen should rise to the elevation of that which men call statesmanship in political affairs, only statesmanship elevated, Christianized and spiritualized.

Suffer me, then, to mention some of the particulars to which, leaning on the arms of the Divine Wisdom, we have need to direct our thoughtful intelligence.

1. We are set to bear witness on this continent to a religion of fact and history.

We may well be thankful that we have in the Acts of the Apostles a faithful account of their interpretation of their commission, and of the means on which they relied for the conversion of the nations.

It was no part of their plan to proclaim a new philosophy, subversive of the systems then in favor. They went out as heralds to publish certain strange things which had actually come to pass. While by no means indifferent to the value of what we now call scientific theology in its proper place, they propound, as the foundation of all their teaching, a veritable history, whereof Jesus of Nazareth was the centre.

Nothing is plainer in the original documents of our holy religion than the distinction, now so often forgotten, between faith and doctrine, the faith which saves, and the doctrine which perfects. It originated in our Lord's own commission to the church. Apostles were to baptize into the thrice-holy name: that is the faith of all men to be inexorably required under penalty of eternal loss: and then He bids them impart to men thus saved, the fulness of doctrine, teaching them to observe and do all things "whatsoever I have commanded you." And did not the undivided church thus interpret its mission and its true policy? What is the language of its universal creeds bound with determination and impartiality, alike on men of culture, on the illiterate peasant or the ignorant slave?

We find there not a technical theology systematized and formulated: but a declaration of belief in God as having revealed Himself in the three-fold personality of His One nature, and this interwoven with a brief statement of historical facts connected with the death, uprising and ascension of one known among men as Jesus the son of Mary.

Now brethren, the desire of the enemy in our days, seems to be to change the battle-ground, to draw us outside of our entrenchments of facts and history, and to contend for the truth and excellence of our religion on the grounds of antecedent fitness and probability. For well he knows that this religion of ours is for the many, for women and children as well as men, for laborers as well as students; and none of these are incapable of forming a judgment in plain matters of fact. But once persuade them that the faith which accepts the facts of history is absurd and unreasonable, unless they can solve the metaphysical questions which underlie those facts, and they begin to waver with every wind of doctrine.

Pardon me, if I seem to press with unnecessary explicitness a class of truths familiar to every Catholic Churchman. But frankly, I believe we Anglicans have not escaped this snare.

I hear the complaint from many bishops, that in the schools of the prophets, Christian apologetics have exchanged the ancient for a modern meaning. They have become deprecative, explanatory, combative of modern speculations, rather than affirmative of fact and evidence. There was an old-fashioned curriculum according to which our young men were taught methodically the reasonable grounds on which to rely for holding the genuineness, the authenticity, the inspiration, the uninterrupted preservation of the holy scriptures. They learned the evidences from monuments and profane history, from undesigned coincidences and patristic quotations. They studied and learned the fallacies of the two great arguments against Christianity which contain "in germ and potency" all that their successors in unbelief are able to say, the illustration alone being varied. Hume's denial of the credibility of the supernatural, and Gibbon's attempt to explain supernatural phenomena, by natural causes.

We would not have them negligent of the controversial literature of the day. But its charm of novelty may lead them to depreciate the value of the historical argument which has been written too fully and with too much ability to be altered in its main outlines. Surely our young students before they launch out into the more modern disputations touching the knowable and the unknowable, should be well grounded in the actual facts on which our faith depends.

2. We are set to bear witness on this continent to a religion of authoritative interpretation.

That the Holy Scriptures contain all divine truth necessary to be believed, and that in ascertaining their meaning every man must use his private judgment, are propositions which all orthodox Protestants unite to affirm. I know not how they can be denied with any show of reason.

And yet what is more misleading than these very axioms when badly stated and applied to the practical problems of faith and duty, in disregard of the great principles of authority!

Surely the members of the legal profession ought to stand by us here. They reverence the supremacy of the law, statute and charter over the commentaries thereon. They recognize the fact that a lawyer worthy of the name must use his individual intelligence and industry, and reason out conclusions for himself.

But what means that vast array of books which constitute their working tools? They stand there as witnesses, that howbeit we must in all questions of human rights go direct to the fountains of original law, and howbeit we must form our own judgment touching the true interpretation of the law, yet does every consideration of prudence, modesty and common sense, require that our conclusions should be guided by the consentient wisdom of those who as judges or as law-writers have administered or expounded the law. I cannot conceive the possibility of an intelligent counsellor at law, by virtue of his right of private judgment, taking up the organic law of his country, ignoring all that he might learn from contemporary history as to the minds of its framers, careless of the famous opinions of jurists and the criteria of judicial decisions, indifferent to the historical outcome and to the political and social institutions in which that organic law found its form and expression.

If the interpretation of Holy Scripture be placed on the same level with that of human constitutions, common sense requires that the private judgment should defer to authority and be guided by it.

Now, when we transfer this duty of reverence for authority, so evident in things secular, into the realm of spiritual truth, a new element comes in to confirm and intensify it. I mean the guidance of the teaching spirit.

The late Bishop of North Carolina, Dr. Atkinson—it is just thirty years since I listened to his consecration sermon, preached by your venerable Metropolitan, and on a text which was the fitting key-note to the episcopate then began, "the spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind." Bishop Atkinson presented this argument somewhat on this wise.

Here stands an unfailing promise to Christ's people, that the Comforter shall guide them into all truth.

So then, desiring to believe aright in some article of the Faith or in some important doctrine, I claim that promise. Emptying myself as I may of pride and prejudice, giving all faithful diligence in the way of thought and study, I enter on the enquiry and presently reach a conclusion.

I have at least some ground to hope that it is the Spirit who has guided me to it, however the fear of some lurking self-will or intellectual pride may cast a doubt.

And now I join myself to others who ponder the same deep matters. We study apart and pray apart to the same Teacher. We come together to compare our conclusions and find that they are substantially the same. I am more hopeful still that I am Spirit-taught.

But let that circle widen: let it embrace all the centuries and the churches of all the nations: let it include the men who conquered the Roman world for Christ, the men who went to the stake and to the lions, how irresistible becomes the argument of their unanimity! They differed in many minor things. But the substantial truth, the "*Semper ubique et ab omnibus creditum*," how came all these men to arrive at it, save under the guidance of the Spirit of truth!

My brethren, is our old time position touching authority in matters of religion no longer defensible? Because men call them antiquated in our age of progress and freedom, shall we fold our colors and trail our arms, and steal out in the dark to entrench ourselves elsewhere? St. Paul and all the great Christian teachers after him appealed boldly to a testimony of humanity itself. Be it a common tradition, be it an instinct, be it the inevitable gravitation of all thoughtful souls to a solid conclusion. God, and heaven and hell are conceptions imbedded in the very heart of humanity at large. Why should we yield up or hide away so authoritative a testimony?

The ontological argument for the existence of God, and the argument from final causes, have they really been shaken, or what means a certain timidity in urging them?

With all the variations on the theme, many of them brilliant and ingenious, has the speculative unbelief of the nineteenth century invented anything beyond the old arguments binding the incredibility of the supernatural and the adequacy of natural courses to account for Christian phenomena, and have not all such arguments been answered in advance?

But I must not weary you by a multiplication of the particulars to which these principles apply.

A worthy preacher, seated by me in a railway car, once said to me: "Your people rely very much for the