

God's own gladly give back to Him. For thus saith Jehovah.—Mal. iii. 7):

Bring all the tithes into the storehouse,
That there may be meat in My house.
And try me now with this, saith Jehovah of Hosts,
Whether I will not open for you the windows of Heaven,
And pour out a blessing for you till there shall be superabundance.

Let the whole Church earnestly pray for the descent of the Holy Ghost, whose warmth can melt the chilling ice of our spiritual winter,—whose light can reveal joys substantial and eternal,—whose dew can moisten the fallow ground, and cause celestial fruits to grow,—whose consolations can give the prelude of the glad song of the Redeemed:

"Holy Ghost, come down upon Thy children,
Give us grace and make us Thine.
Thy tender fires within us kindle,
Blessed Spirit, Dove Divine!"

Then Zion will arise and shine, and her warming glow be felt, and her terraces drop down new wine, and her fields be productive, and her harvest joyful.

J. W. BONHAM.

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IS IT WORTH WHILE?

From remarkably different quarters, of late, the cry has gone up that the Church must be "tolerant" and "comprehensive." A new meaning has been given to the word "Catholic," and it is taken to be a mark of the Church's "Catholicity" that everything, from medievalism to rationalism, may claim a rightful place within her. In fact it is boasted of her as one of the great excellences, which ought to commend her to all good Christians, that she has as many Gospels on some important things, as there are human fancies.

Boasts of this kind are made in Sermons, in Speeches on the floor of Convention, in high places and in low, and we have been assured that it is bigotry and intolerance only which can object to a Stanley on one side or a Bennett on the other, a Purchas or a Voysey, a Mackonochie or a Colenso; that these men have their natural *habitat* in this Church of ours; and even more, that the "views" of none of them perhaps should exclude them from, for instance, the Episcopate.

Now we do not propose here to attack this view, although it is rapidly becoming a cant, and, like all cants, is hateful to us.

We merely propose to make some remarks, and call attention to some consequences.

In the first place, we do not think it was the way in which we used to recommend the Church to the American people. We may be in error. We are not as old as we might be, nor does our memory go to the Flood, but we do not, just now, remember that we used to be in the habit of asking people to become Churchmen on the ground that they might hear every possible view and doctrine, from the verge of Rationalism to that of Romanism, preached and advocated in the Episcopal Church! We did not, as we remember, tempt them by the offer of a rich and infinite variety of contradictions, and the assurance that they might pick and choose all the way from Thomas Aquinas to Charles Darwin.

We did indeed tell them, as we had the right, that Christ's Church is a School. That the weak in faith are to be received, (but also we think it was added "not to doubtful disputations,") that believing the simple Apostles' Creed of Baptism, any scholar might be admitted, but admitted, of course, to future teaching, to future influences, to all the growth in knowledge, wisdom, and faith, provided in the Divine School.

But we generally conveyed the impression that the school had something to teach, that it really had a curriculum, a course of learning for a man to enter upon and go through, and that the masters and the ushers were not each contradicting each, each calling the other's teaching unsound, dangerous, and false.

Now if we accept the new departure as wisdom, we must be prepared to accept its consequences on the community to which this Church is sent to preach the Gospel.

If we were all Churchmen, or if the Church contains all that we care it should contain, it is manifest that the different conditions might excuse and even permit a different course. We might, perhaps, in such case, resolve ourselves, by natural selection, into a set of isolated congregations, each with its own ritual observances, each with its own "views," each with its own peculiarities of doctrine and worship—as many sects and worships as congregations, only all agreeing in a "Form of Government."

But since we believe we are sent, as a Church, to the world, and given a special field in the world, and since

also the law is upon us, that "if one member suffer the other members suffer with it," since, in short, we accept the responsibilities of a *Body*, we cannot, each one, please himself, nor can each congregation please itself.

Nor can the whole Body ignore the effect of its action upon those who are yet outside it, and to whom it claims to be sent, among other things to persuade them to come inside.

This being so, let us inquire whether it is a good basis for advance, a good ground for persuasion to the American mind, a strong argument to those without to come within, that the Church into which we invite them admits all notions, permits all views, tolerates all forms, and has a liberality so enormous that she is practically indifferent to doctrines the most important?

It occurs to one, to begin with, that there is quite as much freedom outside as any reasonable man need care for. There is a variety of Gospels to suit all tastes already, very zealously and very ably taught throughout our country. And the bodies about us are not given to be very intolerant. They allow inside a vast divergence of view, each man to have his psalm, or his prophecy, or his doctrine, and if one does not like the inside, it is no disgrace for him to go out of one body and try another. The whole boundless continent of American Sectarism, and nothingarianism, is before a man, and he may pasture where he will.

If we tell him that the Church is the best type extant of this large and liberal Americanism, that the Gospels of all sects have in her their home, and what his soul pines for in the way of special conceit, or individual heresy, or whimsy, he may have within her, is he greatly tempted to accept the invitation? Has he not all this already? Is it not his right as a free born American to select his own Gospel, to go to mediocrity if he will, or to rationalism if he prefers, to take Aquinas or Theodora Parker for his guide, as he may judge best?

We may say, indeed, "True you have this freedom now in the world and amid sects, but here you will have your freedom secured to you by the sacred guards of an Apostolic Church and Order, and may enjoy it in perfect peace." But may not the answer be, "I do not believe in an Apostolic Church or an Apostolic Order. That is my special view, my pet, prized, *non Credo*." And must not our answer again be, "That shall be no bar. You may also enjoy that view. For it is claimed by the large hearted and liberal among us, that we must not only tolerate Medieval Sacerdotalism, but also the opinion that Apostolic Succession is a myth."

In fact it would seem as if we were determined to leave the man no excuse for not being a Churchman! He may bring with him and enjoy in peace every sectarianism, and every error, so only he will come in. He may do it even while declaring there is no "in"—that the gate is no gate, so wide and high is it, and the wall no wall, so shadowy is it, and that in fact there being so little difference between in and out, it is hardly worth the trouble to exert himself for so small a result.

But suppose we give this people to whom we are sent, credit for being what they are, the most earnest people on the earth. Suppose we see the fact before our eyes that the one question with which its heart wrestles, is the question of Eternal Truth; that the wildest aberrations of its sectarianism, the most monstrous or abnormal births of its sects—its very Mormonisms and Spiritualisms—are passionate attempts to find for itself a secure footing, in a new land, where there are no traditions, religions, and no hereditary Church. Suppose we really rise to see this people's want as itself feels it, the want of some sure footing, some fixed standing ground, some consistent story, amid the babble of religious contradictions. In that case perhaps it may dawn upon us that such a representation of the Church as above, is one which it will not find attractive, that indeed a Church of that sort would be an impertinence in its eyes.

Now we do seriously, and in all charity, and yet with a profound sense of duty, call attention to the drift of a great deal of plausible talk, from a great many voices, and with a great many purposes, tending to set forth the idea of the Church as the body that has no ideas.

We confess to a surprise at the quarters from which we have heard the decrying of doctrine and dogma. We have been astonished at the reception, even in Conventions, of statements, that the speaker cared nothing about such and such a matter, and was prepared to welcome a doctrine and its flat contradiction equally, so only that the passionate asserter of its truth, and the passionate asserter of its "perilous" falsehood, were each "loyal to the Church!" We have wondered what conception of a Church must have been in the mind in such case!

If the Church which we have held and taught to be Apostolic and Catholic, be only a nest to shelter all contradictions, if she have no distinct story to tell, no God's Truth to which to testify, no power and authority to teach, it strikes us she has little reason to claim either loyalty or respect.

Whoever would reduce her to this self annihilating

condition, empty her of fixed doctrine, and make her the ecclesiastic Babel of this country and time, would present not a Church to this people, which is the thing it just now most needs, but another sect, whose "distinctive doctrine" would be that there is no distinctive doctrine whatever!

A VERY LATE PRECEDENT.

A curious illustration of the present attitude of the Diocese of Illinois, in its claims of a sort of diocesan independency, and its invitation to the Church to consider whether the House of Deputies or the Standing Committees have any right to go behind diocesan testimonials to a Bishop-elect, is found in a little bit of history so very recent that we wonder it has been forgotten so completely in Illinois.

A little over two years ago North Carolina proposed to elect an Assistant Bishop, and asked the consent of its sister dioceses to that end.

Every diocese, we believe, consented *except Illinois!* The Standing Committee of Illinois *refused* consent, and ostentatiously and promptly *published* its reasons. Those reasons were founded on such an amazing misinterpretation of the Constitution and Canons, that they were left to Illinois alone to act upon.

The Dioceses consented to the proposed Assistant to Bishop Atkinson, and in due time North Carolina elected by a large majority its present Assistant Bishop. There were no protests, no questions of doubtful doctrine, the elected Bishop was amiable, devoted, unimpeachable, and the hearty choice of the Diocese.

And yet the Standing Committee of Illinois *went behind the papers*, behind the choice of North Carolina, behind the act of its Convention, and on the 5th day of September, 1873, *refused consent to Bishop Lyman's consecration!* And condescended, as far as the public is informed, to *give no reason!*

No one disputed, we believe, the right of the Standing Committee to refuse consent, for the present Illinois doctrine had not then been invented.

This is *exactly eighteen months* ago. The legal ability and learning that guided Illinois then, guides her still. Pity it has so short a memory!

Is that which was *right* for the Standing Committee of Illinois, *wrong* for all other Standing Committees, forever hereafter?

We have received from Illinois a mass of documents on both sides of the vexed question. We think it best to publish none of them. The publication of one would require, "in justice," the publication of another, and the whole matter would be debated over again in these columns. Such debate might be interesting to the debaters, but scarcely so, we think, to our readers.

The questions about the canonicity and constitutionality of certain steps in the Election, are, besides, merely side issues, and are really of no consequence to the general readers. They only blind the eyes to the real issue—the question of doctrinal consistency—the request that the Standing Committees should repeal the action of the General Convention last Fall, and erase the *Pastoral* of 1871.

We wish, from our heart, that there had been no ground afforded on which to put a question of uncanonical or unconstitutional action. It would have been far better for all concerned were such the case. But the minority claim there is such a ground, and they claim it, no doubt, honestly. Their opponents claim there is none, and we have as little doubt they make their claim honestly. But the place to discuss these rival claims, is not here. Our columns are limited, and the general Church is interested, not in these details, but in the broad underlying question how the Church, whose Bishops first, and General Convention second, have put her on record against Eucharistic Adoration as "a deadly error perilous to the souls of men," can manage to make a Bishop of the gentleman whose notoriety rests upon his preaching, holding, and ostentatiously proclaiming, this very "error," and yet lay claim to any right thereafter to guide men in ways spiritual.

While we are far from holding our own particular branch of the Church infallible, we surely may expect it, and we are very certain the community expects it, to show some regard—as much, at least, as a private person would show—to consistency and coherence of action, and to the commonsense of mankind.

But while we have no interest in discussing—and do not think our readers or the Church have—the side issues that Illinois has raised, the standing rule of the JOURNAL requires us to set right any person who claims that we have misrepresented or mistaken his personal action. If we have so done, we shall be glad to do prompt justice; but we must insist that the communication be confined strictly to the matter in hand, and do not open up grounds of debate which must be endless.

We have received a letter from the Chancellor of the Cathedral, from which we extract in accordance with this