

Or again, a man may be perfectly well up in the history of all civilized nations, still it does not follow, because of that, that his utterances on ecclesiastical history are true. In the case of the latter, prejudice, and sometimes very strangely ignorant prejudice too, comes in the way.

If our people were better informed on the subjects of the Church's teaching, they would not be easily led astray by designing men. A considerable proportion of St. Paul's Epistles is taken up with the Apostle's admonitions and counter-teaching, designed to neutralize the false teaching of men in his day, who had ulterior objects in view, in their heretical and schismatical proceedings. It especially behoves our clergy so to mould their instruction as to give their people a fuller insight into the fundamental principles on which the Church has constructed her system. We have designing men, overhearing men with political objects in view, men who would pervert the pure truth of the Gospel of Christ, men whose professed sympathies are with those whose object it is to pull down the Church, and men who therefore desire to degrade the lofty teaching of Christ's own institution to the level of systems of human origin—systems with which their own sympathies are bound up, but which cannot claim to possess a tittle of the sound evangelical Churchmanship of our own branch of the Church Catholic. And yet there are those who are more disposed to follow the vain babblings of designing pretenders like these than the guidance of their own authorized teachers.

Now, although a physician is a proper person to apply to when afflicted by sickness; yet it does not follow that it would not be very desirable for the patient to possess considerable knowledge of the nature of diseases and the properties of medicines. And in reference to the law of the land, although a lawyer would be very properly referred to in the case of a law-suit, yet a considerable knowledge of the law of the case would be very desirable for the client to possess. And so with regard to the Church's teaching. It is very correct, no doubt, to have recourse to the authorized ministers of the Church in doubtful questions of theology; but it is nevertheless very desirable for our people to possess a much larger acquaintance with the Church's teaching, if they would not be led astray by those who "lie in wait to deceive." The great body of the Church of the United States are more conversant with their Church principles than our own people are. Many of them have been brought into the Church from the sects, and have thus been led to study the differences between them; and have thus been led to the conclusion that the Church has a Divine authority and a Divine origin which the sects cannot claim. And in order to meet the demand from inquirers on those subjects, they have sent out some valuable treatises as "Kip's Double Witness of the Church," "Why I am a Churchman," &c., &c., which might be studied with great advantage.

The clergy ought most certainly to direct

more of their teaching to these fundamental doctrines of the Church. For general benefit a series of lectures upon the essential doctrines of the Church given by several of the clergymen would be found beneficial. And two or three judicious laymen, who have really mastered the subject, could assist in this work, and perhaps bring about a more salutary effect than if done by clergymen. A week's work of this description would not be unfruitful, and as well in towns as in our country parishes. Surely men could be found who would gladly join in such a work. Who will take the initiative and begin at once the desired instruction?

THE OLD CATHOLIC MOVEMENT.

BY A LAYMAN.

AS one personally acquainted with Bishop Reinkens, I feel, as it were, compelled to put his position clearly before your readers.

The Bishop himself is more than inclined to do away with clerical celibacy, as an institution established by Gregory VII. to reduce the Roman clergy to the position of mere tools in the hands of the Pope or the Bishop of the diocese. But, like all reformers who wish to see their work established on a sure basis, he is obliged to err, if erring it is, on the side of caution. The Old Catholic party in Germany is not so strong as to be able to afford the secession from its ranks of some of its most distinguished lights. It is true that men like Dollinger, Reusch, and Friedrich, are not at all likely to return to their allegiance to Rome, nor again is the threatened excommunication of the Jansenist Archbishop of Utrecht or his suffragans likely to be regarded as anything else than a *brutum fulmen*. But the mere opposition of such men, their desertion of the cause, and the loss of their influence, had all to be weighed in the balance, whilst a certain amount of deference was certainly due to the Jansenist hierarchy, from which came the old Catholic Episcopal succession. Hence the resolution of Bishop Reinkens rather to put a drag on the wheel of reform than to seem to hurry it on. He knew he had the great majority of the laity on his side—as the voting proved. But he could not—it was not right he should—despise those influential members of the priesthood whose opinions were in favour of the celibacy of all in Sacred Orders. The views of men of that stamp—men distinguished as well for their learning as for their piety—must be treated with respect, nor should any steps be taken to alienate them till the change proposed is, (1), right in itself and, (2), for the greater good of the Church. To bring about any such change only the voice of the unimpassioned and impartial majority should be deemed competent, this voice to be expressed in Council or Synod solemnly assembled according to the Church's custom after the invocation of the Holy Spirit. It is evident, however, that this unimpassionedness and this quasi-unanimity cannot, as things go, be arrived at all at once, in one sitting, or without due deliberation, lest it should be said by the foes of the Church that feeling rather than sound rea-

soning, or passion rather than logic, had prevailed, or lest the outcome should prove that it had not been sufficiently tried whether or not what men deemed the inspirations of the Holy Spirit were in reality promptings having only humanism as their origin. Against these objections Bishop Reinkens has had to guard, and, to secure the desired result of proving that the work was not of man but of God, he has, so to say, kept the question of clerical celibacy in the back-ground, till its decision, one way or the other, became of vital importance to the rising community. Then, and at the risk of offending some of his staunchest supporters—not of creating a schism—the matter has been decided, under his auspices, if apparently against his opinions. In this matter, possibly Dr. Reinkens personally prefers to adhere to a practice which, as regards himself, has "grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength." But, mindful of what is the duty of a bishop, he has preferred to give in on a point involving no question of Christian doctrine—a point on which St. Paul himself held strong views—whilst, like the great Apostle, he has allowed his flock to enjoy the liberty of which that Ultramontaniam which he and they have abjured would fain deprive them.

As to a schism, *me judice*, that is not to be feared. Reusch and Friedrich may cease to minister, as Dr. Dollinger has done long since, as Old Catholic priests. They will not, however, any more than has Dr. Dollinger, in consequence, form a new and a schismatical body, but will more likely follow his example and retire from open communion with either the Roman or the Old Catholic bodies. As regards the anathema of Utrecht, Bishop Reinkens will regard it as little as Luther did that of the Pope. He knows that in all things save their Jansenism and their severance from Rome—a severance which, after all, is rather one of fact than of will on their part—those who pay obedience to the Archbishop of Utrecht, are doctrinally identical with the Catechism of the Council of Trent. Under these circumstances, therefore, it would not be for the advantage of the German Old Catholics to ally themselves with a body whose tenets are not those of the Primitive Church—a body which has just as much or as little right to anathematize members of a branch of the Church Catholic as the Archbishop of Canterbury would have to fulminate his excommunication against the Patriarch of Constantinople.

As to the ultimate effects of this coming nearer to the primitive mode, there cannot, I should imagine, be two opinions. The Old Catholics of Switzerland, under Bishop Hertzog, and the as yet only nascent Old Catholic congregations in France, in each of which countries the remodelled Church is much more like the Church of the Fathers than that in Germany, are now more than ever drawn towards union with their German brethren, whilst every step that serves to show the determination of Bishop Reinkens to separate himself more and more from Rome, Rome's discipline, and Rome's doctrine, in so far as