

**HOPEFUL OBSERVATIONS BY DIS-  
SENTERS.**

A few Sundays ago a sermon was preached at East Parade Chapel, Leeds, the pastor of which had lately resigned the charge, but died soon afterwards. Dr. Conder was well known and much respected as a minister of the East Parade Chapel (Congregationalist) for many years. He was a man of high culture and great love and breadth of thought. It appears to be true to say that a very large portion of his congregation has slowly left the chapel and passed into the Church—a proof of the tendency of his views and teaching. The sermon alluded to, however, was by Dr. Morris, from Brecon Independent College, some of whose observations are encouraging, as showing an advancement towards reunion which would have startled Churchmen thirty years ago. Dr. Morris based his sermon on three texts, viz.:

'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.'

'Hold fast the form of sound words.'

'I have kept the faith.'

Unless the report be incorrect, Dr. Morris said: 'I take it that the Apostles' Creed is merely a development and expansion of this confession. The Apostles' Creed is a very good form of words, and altogether true; it is continually repeated in the Church of England; perhaps many of you know it, but, in case you do not, I will repeat it.' (The Creed was then read.) 'It is possible that some repeat this Creed without meaning it, which is a pity; but, for those who can repeat it from the heart, it is most truly blessed, they receive distinct illumination, and they grow in the truth of God.'

It would be well if every Churchman would lay hold on these observations, and practically apply them. But such observations as these by Dr. Morris would, it is quite certain, have caused no small dissension in many dissenting places of assembly a few years ago. Orthodoxy is still, happily, felt to be a necessity. Right doctrine and right practice must go together, and it is encouraging to see proofs that some, at least, are trying to lay hold of the anchor firmly.

There is something very terrible and depressing (as Dr. Talbot, vicar of Leeds, puts it with much force and power, and yet very lovingly, in his kind remarks upon Dr. Conder) in the fact that Christ's glorious Gospel is testified in separation and even in hostility. St. Paul experienced this trial, but the separation and the hostility of his day were far short of the separation and the hostility of this present period of the Church's history. There was no actual severance from the unity of the Church. It is no breach of propriety, it is hoped, to record here that not very long ago Dr. Conder remarked to a lady who, on her way to church, called and took tea with him, 'Well, the Church has absorbed my principles, and I don't care how soon it absorbs me.' Such words are well worthy of attention. Rather remarkable, too, are some observations in the *Friend's Quarterly Examiner* (fourth month), 1892. There is some very sweet and some very able writing in it. There is also a statement of facts in sundry portions of it which show internal difficulties and troubles amongst this brotherhood in olden times which

go far to evidence that they certainly were often in error, though it is more agreeable to contemplate how the love of God blesses the sincere seeker even although that seeker is assuredly in very great error in neglecting the outward and visible signs and seals of grace in the two sacraments. In 1676, at York, they resolve 'to consider of Friends' deportment at burials, in giving or receiving rosemary, gloves, or otherwise, as the world doth.' Not to quote Sir W. Scott's beautiful lines in *Rokeby*, it is interesting to think how, in grand old Yorkshire, where rosemary will not flourish out of doors, every cottager has a plant or more in a pot within his house, so that when he receives a 'lathing' (Saxon for *invitation, entreaty*) to the funeral of a neighbour, he may be able to cast a sprig upon the coffin—a sign of good feeling, and an emblem of his belief in the resurrection. Further on, in 1716, Friends in York are found not approving of some of their body marrying within twelve months of the death of former wife or husband. And then, more to the purpose under consideration, a Friend, 'John Cox,' gives anxiety. His moral character seems doubtful, but 'his theology was attacked; he has used the word "Trinity," and was thought to approve of the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, and to be somewhat uncertain about so-called "ordinances." But now, at page 209 of this *Quarterly*, may be found a chapter entitled 'The Divine Mystery.' It is deep, thoughtful, reverent, and very interesting. It almost demonstrates 'the rationality, the certainty, the blessedness, the gloriousness of three Persons yet one God in the Eternal Godhead.' It does this in somewhat original and striking manner, which at once appeals to humanity and common sense.

The writer appears to be a man of much greater power and of far better character than 'John Cox,' but he uses the words 'Trinity' and 'Unity' distinctly. It would be pleasing to copy pp. 213 and 214, but space forbids, and the following extracts must suffice:—

'Surely we may rejoice that the thought here shadowed has been from the beginning laid down by the Divinely guided Church in all places, in the unchangeable declaration that there is a third eternal Person of God coming forth for ever from both the Father and the Son.....not a mere impersonal quality existing in these Two, but a person for ever distinct..... The above pages were not written to demonstrate a theorem or develop an argument by induction, but simply to re-describe the doctrine of the Trinity in such a way that it may be seen more than ever not only to be as ancient as Christendom, but as in itself pre-eminently *reasonable*!.....Let them observe the tendencies of the body called Unitarian, and then settle it in their minds; whether if Quakerism adopts such a view as theirs, the Divine faith of Quakerism will not dwindle down perforce to a meaningless recognition of the no-god of the Agnostics..... The true position is that, unless we believe in the Trinity, we cannot with any distinctness believe in the Unity; and surely too, when a nation loses that fundamental acceptance of the Unity, it loses along with it the whole true basis of its religious life, and, consequently, of its moral practice.

'For nations are sternly committed to the logical results of their actions and notions, and the pleas that may avail for individuals cannot be applied to them. If they reject the foundation of truth, the superstructure must fall. If one part is sung amiss in their chorus of praise, the whole becomes discordant; while the true music of the spheres, the very hymn sung before the Throne, is simply this, that God's elect fall before Him day and night, crying to Him—and never wearying as they cry—"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and

and ever shall be, world without end. Amen."'

This remarkable article is subscribed, 'W. H. Pollard.'

It may or it may not be a matter of wonder to Church folk how religious and pious men who proclaim the principles which are copied here can possibly remain outside the communion of the Church. But that cannot be discussed here just now. Enough to draw attention to these very powerful and important statements by Dr. Conder, by Dr. Morris, and by Friend W. H. Pollard. They are very encouraging to those who, while paying for Unity, are anxious that it come about slowly and on true principles rather than hastily and in a merely popular way which would not endure' and who expect a gradual return of thousands back to the Church as individuals, long before any sort of Corporate Reunion can be entertained.

Oh, that Congregationalist and Friend could but just find within the Church all that is dearest to them now, in their sad separation, *plus* all that the Church possesses and offers! Unity on sound principles would *slowly* follow, but *surely* also. It is marvellous to some men that the Church witnesses these lovely and extraordinary proofs of yearning after unity, and does so little to say, 'Welcome, beloved brethren, into the dear and ancient communion of the dear and ancient Church of God. We will secure to you all that is really good in your ways of worship, as well as the many things you cannot have outside the Church's communion. As the branch of the Catholic Church existing from the very beginning in this land, we cannot fail to offer you all reasonable variety and regulated freedom in the Divine worship.' Myriads would return if only this were done.—G. V. in *Church Bells*.

**INFALLIBILITY.**

HOW FAR, AND WHERE, MAY CERTAINTY OF TRUTH BE EXPECTED IN THE TEACHING OF THE CHURCH?

*By the Bishop of Qu'Appelle.*

(CONTINUED.)

But did our Lord give to *any* person or persons, if not to St. Peter alone, any authority to teach infallibly? Did He give any promise that would reasonably lead us to expect that there would be such infallible guidance in His Church? The only words of Christ that specially refer to this are the following:

"The gates of hell shall not prevail against it" [i.e. the Church]. Matt. xvi. 18.

"When He the Spirit of Truth is come He will guide you into all Truth." S. John xvi. 13.

"Go ye, and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you." S. Matt. xxviii. 20.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." S. Mark xvi. 16.

From these passages it is certainly reasonable to infer that our Lord meant that His Church and His people should have a sufficient guarantee against falling into error on matters of faith that were necessary for the stability, or well-being, of the Church, or for the salvation of souls.

If the Apostles were to teach the world it was certainly necessary that they should *know* the truth they were to teach; if the gates of hell were not to prevail against the Church it must be guarded against the inroads of error to the undermining, through human frailty or perversity, of the fundamentals of the faith on which the Church was built. And our Lord therefore promised that the Holy Spirit would guide the Apostles into all the truth—all the truth, that is, that it was necessary for the Church to know