

esting to the world at large when it is of public importance either on account of the man himself or the nature of his utterances. Now, judged by this criterion we think there is very little that Mr. Pedley says should ever attain the dignity of public print. Take for instance the sermons he annually preaches on the graves of the preceding year. Hundreds of people have read beforehand in the obituary columns of the Graphic, the Illustrated London News and similar publications all he has to say, and yet the newspapers devote columns to his rehash. Again, more than a column was given last week to his straddle-the-fence oration on prohibition which, boiled down, simply amounted to an infamous slander of Great Britain and Spain, with the announcement that he intended to vote for Prohibition with some mental reservations which were set forth at tiresome length.

In this sermon Mr. Pedley, after stating that he hates lying, said, "I would rather have honest Britain with the drink curse round her neck than temperate Spain with falsehood rooted in her very vitals." Passing over the slanderous insinuation regarding Britain we characterize the last inuendo in this paragraph regarding Spain as one of the most contemptible and maliciously unfair statements—we might easily use a stronger expression—which could well be imagined. It is a case of deliberately maligning an honest and honorable people who for purity of purpose and honorable dealing both in speech and in action stand out in striking contrast to those amongst whom Mr. Pedley has had his limited experience. We can well understand why Mr. Pedley thought it necessary before venturing this statement to make such a strong protestation of his hatred of lying, but whilst it may have imposed, at least for the moment, on some of his hearers there are many of those that read his language in cold print who find it difficult to believe his solemn declaration on this point in face of the brutally unjust and unfounded insinuation (and again we are using a mild expression) with which he immediately followed it up.

LECTURE ON SCRIPTURE INTERPRETATION.
By Rev. L. Drummond, S. J.
A Summary.

The Immaculate Conception Church was crowded on Sunday evening, Sept. 25th, when the Rev. Father Drummond S. J., resumed his series of monthly lectures on the Bible. He said that by way of introduction he intended that evening to speak about certain rules which ought to guide them in the interpretation of the Bible, and in the first place they must see how many meanings the sacred text might take upon itself. There was the literal meaning, subdivided into the non-figurative and the figurative of which the non-figurative was the more common but there were many cases in which the figurative was the sole meaning as when St. John the Baptist said "Behold the Lamb of God" the literal but figurative meaning being that Christ was the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world.

Then there was the mystical or typical meaning in which a person or event was made the type of a future person or event which was called the anti-type. The type was the resemblance of which the anti-type was the reality, and God alone could so create a type that it would represent an anti-type which was to come hundreds or thousands of years later.

The church's teaching was that every passage in scripture has a literal meaning; there is no passage which has only a typical or mystical meaning. As to the rules of interpretation, the first rule was to take the obvious, plain, non-figurative meaning unless there was some strong reason to depart from it. This was illustrated by the words, "This is my body," everything in the context shewed that it must be really the body of Christ, and moreover the greater part of the sixth chapter of St. John announced the promise of this gift. The Jews were shocked at the obvious interpretation, but Christ, instead of explaining away the cause of their astonishment, strengthened it by saying "unless ye eat the flesh of the son of man ye shall not have everlasting life." This was remarkable because when Christ found people in error he generally corrected that error immediately, as in the case of Nathanael who misunderstood His words "Unless a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God." Then Nathanael asked "how could a man be born again when he was old," and Christ then explained that it was not a carnal birth but a spiritual. On the contrary in the case of His flesh and blood Christ retracted nothing, but simply asked whether the apostles themselves were also going to leave him, as much as to say "you may leave me but I will not change my doctrine." Therefore there was every reason to receive the literal, non-figurative meaning of this passage. A great point was made about 1836 when Cardinal Wiseman was lecturing in London and preparing by his lectures the Catholic revival of the present time, by a certain Dr. Clarke, who pretended that Christ had to say "This is my body" there being no word in the Syriac language expressing the idea of representing. Thereupon Dr. Wiseman, who was one of the greatest living authorities on the Syriac language, showed that there were five times as many words or expressions in the Syriac language to express a figure or a symbol as there are in the English language, and therefore all Dr. Clarke's fabric fell to the ground.

Sometimes, however, we must take the figurative sense as the only literal one and this figurative sense might extend throughout a whole book like the "Canticle of canticles" or "Song of songs" about which the common opinion of Catholic interpreters was that its literal meaning was a metaphorical one, that it was one continued allegory.

The second rule was to examine the context before and after the text, not to wrench texts from their contexts. Most of the objections against the Catholic Church were based on solitary texts torn from their contexts and when the converts were examined the difficulty disappeared.

The third rule was to examine parallel passages, which throw light on the original passage; this was especially true of the New Testament where three of evangelists and sometimes four related the same event in different words and the very varieties in the form of their narrative tended to strengthen the certainty of its substance.

The fourth rule was never to interpret a text against the dogmatic definitions of the Church. These dogmatic definitions sometimes told them what a text, did not mean, sometimes what it meant. For instance, the Council of Trent affirmed that the text "whose sins you shall forgive" etc. should not be understood as referring merely to the power of preaching the gospel; and an example of the positive definitions of the Church were the words before referred to "This is my body", of which the same council said these words signify that the body of Jesus Christ is really and substantially present under the appearances of bread and wine.

The fifth rule of interpretation was not to go against the common consent of the Fathers. This consent was the moral unanimity which occurred for a few classical texts.

The sixth rule of interpretation was not to interpret any text in a sense that would be contrary to the obvious teaching of the Church. For instance, the text "Whom He will be hardeneth," could not be understood as indicating that God hardened directly the hearts of sinners but merely that God allowed the sinner's heart to grow hardened by not given him that super-abundance of graces which would have softened his heart, in other words God permitted the hardness of heart but did not cause it. These rules constituted as it were lighthouses on the sea of life to light them into port of salvation. Vast tracts were not charted, but the more plainly the entrance to the port was indicated as to depth, and hidden reefs, the safer would be the navigation and the easier would be their entrance into the heavenly haven.

LETTER FROM ALASKA

Continued from page 1

whom I have left behind. This does not hinder me from often praying for them.

My little chapel is not in a fit state for the reservation of the Sacred Host; and, even if it were, I should hesitate to keep the Blessed Sacrament there, as I am obliged to leave my house untenanted and unguarded for many hours at a time. True, we never hear of thefts nor of any attempt thereat in this country; the honesty of the people is quite primeval. Yet there are some risks one can hardly run, and this is one of them.

Good-bye, if I can, I shall write once more before the ice hems us in.

Jules Jetté, S. J.

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