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GUIDE MARKS

FOR

YOUNG CHURCHMEN,

BY

RICHARD HOOKER WILMER, D.D., LL.D.

BISHOP OF ALABAMA.



NEW YORK

THOMAS WHITTAKER

2 AND 3 BIBLE HOUSE

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INTRODUCTORY.

THIS little Tractate is a part of a volume published by the undersigned some two years ago, entitled "The Recent Past," or "Reminiscences of a Grandfather." It treated, to some extent, of matters political. A desire has been expressed for the publication, in separate form, of that portion of the work which treats of matters Religious and Ecclesiastical, and hence this present issue. It was originally written without any view to publication, and that will account for its personal and familiar style.

As a matter of course, this little volume has only touched the subject matters treated of in barest outline. It is nothing more than a rivulet, but it flows along towards the great sea of knowledge, where he who thirsts may drink to his heart's content.

RICH'D H. WILMER.

EASTER, 1889.

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GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

IN a much larger volume, from which these pages are extracted, I have written of things political, and have endeavored to impress upon your minds the duties pertaining to your earthly citizenship. I come now to speak of a higher and more enduring theme—the “Kingdom of God.” The kingdoms of men come to an end; vast empires, that once swayed the destinies of the world, are now known only on the pages of history. They rise, fall and utterly come to naught. They are of the things of time, and perish with time. You, my children, will have a high duty to perform in being good citizens, in upholding law and the administration of law. It is a part of one’s religion, as well as loyalty, to be law-abiding citizens. Our country, now peaceful after a bloody war, may continue so for years; but there are existing elements of conflict which will become explosive whenever the population becomes dense enough for ignition,

The Old World is pouring in its tide of population—peoples of all religions and no religion—all jumbled in a mighty mass. What will become of it all, who can tell? One thing seems most certain—that human affairs move forward and not backward. The state of the world, at this writing, is doubtless better, on the whole, than at any former period of time, and there is no good reason for supposing that it will take a retrograde movement. You will have to adjust yourselves to the era in which you live, keeping a true manhood, whatever the issue: that will bring a man peace at the last: that makes the man.

But I must pass to the consideration of "God's Kingdom"—the Church of God. "Of that Kingdom"—as you have been taught to rehearse—"*there shall be no end.*" My great desire is that my children shall have an inheritance in that Kingdom, and ever be associated with it, as I and my fathers were. The whole matter, as you may easily suppose, has been my life-long study, and I want you to have the benefit of my thoughts and conclusions thereupon.

You will find the religious world much divided. I cannot speak of all the existing organizations—for their name is "Legion,"—but I desire to put

before you, in a general way, the attitude of that Branch of the Church in which I have been reared and of which you have been made members by baptism—the attitude, I say, of this Church towards the rest of Christendom. Its name is “The Protestant Episcopal Church,” and it may be interesting to you to learn that this appellation was suggested by one of your ancestors. The name is not a felicitous one, but has a noble record and a roll of illustrious men. This Church, as all your reading will show, is an offshoot of the Established Church in England, deriving its orders from that Church, also its Liturgy and Usages. We must go a little back to inquire into the history of the Mother Church, before proceeding to outline the particular relation of her daughter to the religious world around it in this country.

THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND.

THE Church of Christ was planted in England at a very early day—most probably by one of the Apostles of our Lord. This you will find in any early history of the English Church. Representatives from the British Church were present at the councils of the Church at a very early day (A.D. 325); long before the unhappy division took place which separated the Eastern from the Western Church.

Rome, being the controlling power of the world for a long period of time, became, naturally, the centre of other influences, religious as well as political. The Bishop of Rome, sustained by the civil and military power, had no great difficulty in obtaining ultimate recognition as the Supreme Ecclesiastical power in the west of Europe. England held out against her jurisdiction as long as possible,

but finally acknowledged the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome in things spiritual. Augustine, a missionary under Rome, went to England, and found the southern part of the kingdom—inhabited by the Saxon race—without the Christian faith. The British Church already existed when he put his foot on the coast of England. Little by little, in the course of time, the Church in England came under the domination of the Pope.

It went sorely against the spirit and temper of our English forefathers to acknowledge fealty to any foreign power, Civil or Ecclesiastical. They fought against it as long as possible, but had at last to yield. It was this spirit of jealousy against the intrusion of a foreign power, which made it so easy at a subsequent period to throw off the yoke which had been to so many, even Romanists in doctrinal matters, a galling servitude. But a new era dawned. Books became multiplied, and knowledge was more generally diffused. The “Great Reformation” took place.

I must say a word about that great movement, of which all history of that age is full. Henry VIII., the King of England at the time, was far from being a pattern of good morals. He was imperious and lustful. A decision of the reigning

Pope of Rome crossed his purposes, and Henry asserted—as he had a right to do—the independence of the Church in England. The claim of the Bishop of Rome to exercise jurisdiction in England had no divine, but simply a human, sanction. The yoke was, therefore, thrown off—as it had been put on—by human hands. It was a right and lawful thing done, although done by a bad man. This often happens. The wrath and lust of men are often overruled to work out most gracious purposes. We are often twitted with the taunt that Henry VIII. was the founder of the English Church; whilst the fact is that it existed centuries before Henry's day, and has existed centuries since. The same Bishops exercised jurisdiction in England before and after the Reformation. There was no break in the line of Bishops whatever. The Church in England did not cease to be Catholic because she then cast off many uncatholic doctrines and usages, which had become encrusted upon her. Henry VIII. was ever a Roman Catholic in heart and doctrine. No prevailing doctrine was changed or modified during his reign. In fact, he won his title of "Defender of the Faith" for fighting against Reformed Doctrines. God made use of his imperiousness and

impatience of will to throw off a foreign yoke, which had been wrongly imposed, and reluctantly worn by the great mass of the English people. This emancipation set free the minds of men, and Henry's successors to the throne favored the mighty change which was being wrought in the religious mind, and thus it was, by little and little as light and knowledge were vouchsafed, that the Church in England came out of the wilderness of superstition, cleansed from many corruptions, and stood forth, and now stands forth, the zealous maintainer of the Faith and Discipline "once delivered to the saints."

Wherever her influence extends, light and knowledge are diffused; peoples are elevated; freedom is proclaimed; law is administered, and righteousness prevails. Take the map of the world. Look at the nations under Roman ecclesiastical rule—Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, Ireland and Mexico. What keeps these people in the background? What makes the difference in Ireland between Romanists and Protestants? Spain was far ahead of England at the era of the Reformation. Englishmen studied in her schools of learning. But Spain extinguished the dawning light of

the Reformation in the lurid glare of the Inquisition and Spain has decayed from that day.

The spirit of the Roman Church is calculated to undervalue the exercise of reason, and to arrest the spirit of inquiry, which has so stimulated scientific investigation, and made this age so fruitful in knowledge. Of course, this spirit may be carried too far, and may lead to mere rationalism. But what may not be carried too far? You cannot fertilize a spot of land without stimulating the growth of weeds, but you also cannot make the best kind of grain without fertilization. So, of the printing press—it brings many bad thoughts to the mind, but it also brings the best thoughts out. It is a bad sign when any man or system avoids the light. “Let there be light,” the herald-cry in chaos, and chaos departed when light came.

The best test of the truth of any system, when you can make a large enough induction, is that furnished by our Lord. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” As a Church, influencing laws, literature and morals, we do not fear to challenge all Christendom. England is what she is, mainly through the Church in England, and, to this hour, she exerts a more enlightening and benignant influence upon the world than any other nation. It will not do to

turn from a large survey of her influence, and taunt her with being reformed by such a man as Henry VIII. She was *deformed* by that monarch. He was the foul spot that disfigured that era; but, as the rust, he ate away the chain that bound the Church to the court of Rome, and set her free for her glorious mission of evangelization and civilization to the remotest islands of the sea.

Flings at Henry, and twittings about his part in the Reformation, come with a bad grace from the Roman Church, which has preferred men to honor and to the highest places in her gift—even to the so-called chair of St. Peter (when it is doubtful whether the Holy Apostle ever sat in it)—men, I say, in comparison with whom Henry might be canonized as a saint. Read any history of the Popes (*e. g.* 'Ranke') and you will return to the pages of Henry's life with a sense of relief, bad as that life was.

When we sum up all that the Church in England has done in literature, in science, in learning, in works of beneficence, in sacredly preserving the Word of God, in translating it for the people of the world, in disseminating the righteous principles of law and equity, in diffusing a spirit of freedom and, with it, the needful checks and balances of

government, we may well thank God for our English blood and traditions, and cherish them as the priceless inheritance from our fathers; and, at the same time, next to that imposed by the knowledge of salvation, as the weightiest responsibility that rests upon us.

THE CHURCH IN AMERICA.

LET us come down a little in our review to the planting of the American colonies; chiefly from Great Britain were they planted. We encounter, sometimes, a spirit of rivalry and jealousy on the part of some American people towards the mother country—a sentiment always unwholesome and ungracious, but peculiarly so, when directed against our mother land. Our ancestors found nothing precious on these shores, save the soil and the riches beneath it. These were divine gifts and demand unspeakable gratitude. What else did they find? They brought with them their blood, lineage, language, laws, literature, Church and thousand-fold traditions, all of which moulded for them their new life and institutions in their newly-found country. The wigwam of the Indian did not furnish forth the equipment with which our forefathers began the battle of life on the American Continent. The principles of liberty and the knowledge of religion were not found here, but brought here. The bat-

tle which settled the rights of men had been fought on British soil, and won by our British ancestors.

The particular form of government established here, after independence was secured, was the outgrowth of circumstances in large part; but the foundations and principles of our government were laid by statesmen who had drunk deep at English fountains, and had been trained in the traditions of English sires. Let it never be forgotten by my children, that the sons of Englishmen, and of English Churchmen, were the great men—the giants—who fought the war of the Revolution, and laid the foundations of the American Republic.

Time would fail me to enumerate them. Glance at the names of a few in the honored list—Washington, Hamilton, Madison, Marshall and a host of others—“*Nomina clara et venerabilia.*” So it was in the unsuccessful conflict for Southern independence—Davis, Lee, Johnson, (Joseph E. and Albert Sidney) Hardie and an innumerable host of greater or lesser lights. The same is true of the distinguished statesmen of the Northern States. Nor is this at all accidental. It comes by operation of a law—the law of elective affinity. There is something of combined grandeur and simplicity

in the spirit and services of the Church, which irresistibly, and oft unconsciously, draws to it such men, (not raised in the Church) as Clay and Webster, for example. Besides, the training in the Church tends to the production of such men. The great men among the Methodists (such as Wesley and Whitfield) had Church mothers, and were early taught in the Church Catechism and were baptized, confirmed, educated and ordained in the Church.

HOW THE CHURCH WAS PLANTED IN AMERICA.

THE Church of England clergy in the Colonies (therebeing at that time no *Bishops* this side of the water) had been ordained in England, and were under the jurisdiction of the English Church until the close of the Revolutionary War. You will find a full account of the whole matter in "Bishop White's (the first Bishop of Pennsylvania) Memoirs." Bishop Seabury was consecrated Bishop of Connecticut by the Bishops of the Church in Scotland. Bishops White of Pennsylvania, Madison of Virginia, and Provost of New York, were consecrated by the Bishops of the Church in England (the Archbishop of Canterbury acting as consecrator in his chapel at Lambeth). There, the Apostolic succession was derived by this Church. Dioceses have sprung up through the whole land. Several of the States comprehend, at this writing, two or more Dioceses each,—the State of New York at this time five.

It is often asked, "How is it that this Church, claiming as it does, the elements of a pure Catholicity, should have failed to get a stronger hold upon the great body of the people in this country?" The question is an important one, and demands a fuller answer than this narrative seems to call for. If the failure, referred to, were the result of any want of adaptation on the part of this Church to meet the *needs* of the great mass of the people, it were a *fatal* defect. But it is not so. In the mother country, the poor, equally with the rich, meet at her altars. In the rural districts, prince and peasant receive together her teachings, and unite in her Liturgy. The manufacturing towns are the homes of dissent. There the social jealousy and the impatience of subordination and the spirit of vulgar self-assertion most abound, and there Dissent is rife.

The Roman Church has but little hold upon the native masses in this country, and she imports her poor. I refer to this fact because we are constantly taunted with the reproach of having no poor in our Churches, and shallow people—and most people are shallow—are made to think that the Church careth not for the poor. There is another view. Should the Church have so many poor? Should

she not enlighten and elevate them? Should not the hovels of our laborers be made more comfortable, even if our Churches were less gorgeous? Our system encourages giving to, and not taking from, the poor. Would not "our Father," who careth for the poor, have it so?

I cannot suppress a very suggestive incident. Passing once up the Alabama River, I fell into conversation with a gentleman of the Roman persuasion. After some talk, slightly sprinkled with controversy, he observed: "I do not think, sir, you can doubt that our priests are more assiduous in the discharge of their duties than Protestant ministers are." "I have not been struck with the fact, if it be a fact," I replied. "Now," said he, taking up a newspaper which he had been reading, "here is an account of a man who was hung near Philadelphia the other day. Who was on the scaffold with him and giving him spiritual direction? None of your Protestant preachers, sir,—a priest, a Catholic priest." "That is exactly where he ought to have been," I suggested. "Why, sir?" "Because it was one of his flock that was to be hung. I have never, myself, refused to attend one of my flock to the scaffold, because I have never been called upon.

The Church should save her sheep from such an ending."

In this connection, the prevailing poverty and distress of the Irish people is full of suggestion and instruction. Why is the condition of the Protestant portion of the population so strikingly in contrast with that of their Roman Catholic fellow citizens? The contrast presents itself to the most casual observer, who travels through the country. Yet these people live on the same soil, are under the same sky, and are governed by the same laws. The same problem faces you in Mexico, South America, Portugal, Spain and even in Italy itself—the centre of Romanism. What is the difficulty and what the solution of the problem? These are phenomena worth the attention of men who give themselves to studies of lesser magnitude.

The solution to my mind is very easy. "Christ is the Light of the World." He declares of His own words, "they are spirit and they are life." His spirit accompanies His word, and, "Where the spirit of Christ is there is liberty—emancipation from the slavery of ignorance and sin. Now, if men are denied access to this Fountain of Light, if the Holy Book be closed and the light of its teachings excluded, there will be ignorance of

spiritual truth—infidelity and superstition, its twin children—unlike, apparently, but sprung of the same origin and bound for the same destiny.

Romanism and the open Gospel cannot coexist, and Rome knows this, alas! too well. How could the newly promulgated Doctrine of the “Immaculate Conception” and its corollary, Mariolatry, have found access to the minds of men, who had learned the truth from the words of Christ,—“Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only thou shalt serve.”

In what violent contrast appear the teachings of the Scriptures and some of the most notorious usages and teachings of the Roman Church.

Take a few notable examples of sharp contrast. Christ declared in the Judgment Hall, “My Kingdom is not of this world.” On the other hand the present Bishop of Rome, the so-called Vicar of Christ, mourns over the loss of his temporal power, and is exercising all the arts of subtle diplomacy to regain his lost dominion.

Again, when you enter the Palace of the Bishop of Rome, you see the inevitable band of armed mercenaries stationed to guard his person. On the other hand, behold his Master! When one of his disciples—the Apostle Peter—drew his sword to

protect his Lord from arrest, he was commanded to put up his sword and rebuked for having drawn it. "Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me twelve legions of Angels?" What a contrast between the twelve legions of Angels—"ministering spirits"—who awaited but the bidding of the Lord to come to His succor, and a band of hireling soldiers maintained to guard the person of His servant! "Is the servant greater than the Master?"

Again, when Cornelius met St. Peter and fell down before him, what does the Holy Apostle say to him? "Stand up! I myself also am a man!" What a contrast to St. Peter does the Bishop of Rome—the so-called successor of St. Peter—present when he receives daily the devotions and genuflexions of his followers.

What a picture of like sharp contrast presents itself in the shape of Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, but alas, the Scriptures are a sealed book to the great multitude, and "they know not what they do." All thanks to the Divine Goodness which still pities such ignorance, folly and sin.

The situation of the Church in these United States is peculiar. Many of the old families—notably in New York, Maryland and Virginia—

were, as a matter of course, almost always (except in Maryland, where the Roman Catholic element was unusually large) Church families. In the wild settlements, there is always an undue jealousy of social distinctions on the part of the laboring class, and they prefer to congregate among those of their own order, where their means of living, mode of life, style of dress, and topics of thought and conversation, are more alike.

As an instance. My first parish was along the banks of the James River, beginning about thirty miles above Richmond, and extending some fifty miles towards Lynchburg. The families attending my services at the beginning of my ministrations were almost exclusively from the class of wealthy planters. In the vicinity of my Churches were Baptist and Methodist houses of worship, and there congregated the overseers and small farmers from the hill country. These people knew nothing of Church doctrine or order, but they wanted to associate with flocks of their own condition and pursuits. The men wanted to gossip with their fellows, and the wives and daughters wanted their bonnets and gowns to be as good as their neighbors'. The effect of Democratic institutions and the extension or suffrage and the abolishment of privileged orders

was wonderfully rapid among the people of this country.

There is much discussion now-a-days as to the question, "How to get hold of the masses?" You can't do it at all by any system of operations of a mechanical character. There is a repulsion on their part, and produced by the very spirit of envy and jealousy and self-assertion which the Church tries to put down and eradicate. It can only result from a larger measure of that Divine influence which eradicates self, and inspires a thirst for truth. A minister, who himself is deeply imbued with the Divine gift, and has power and tact, can work wonders with this repelling prejudice, as he can with the other powers of darkness. And that is our only hope just now,—a faint one, I must confess.

But, besides this indwelling spirit of social jealousy with its attendant ills, there were peculiar difficulties with which this Church had to contend in her earlier history in this country,—difficulties which laid the foundation of sectism deep and broad. The clergy of this Church were, as a general rule, Englishmen. The Church itself went by the appellation of "*The English Church.*" We had no Bishops, no Seminaries—everything was English. War with England had filled the whole

country with animosity against everything "English"—Church and State. A tide of odium and unreasonable hate went like a wave over the whole country, and threatened to engulf all sacred memories that commonly attach men to the land of their forefathers.

The Church suffered grievously for a long time, and has not to this day fully rallied from the shock received. The clergy, many of whom were Englishmen by birth, returned to their native land, thus leaving many parishes vacant. Many of those who remained during the continuance of the Revolutionary war were incompetent, and, as is the case oftentimes with colonial ministers, were men of little character. A long interval ensued before Bishops were set apart for America. The consequences of all this was disastrous in the extreme. Parishes went rapidly to decay; legislation confiscated Church property, the gift of the crown or of English land owners; popular prejudice ran fiercely against her institutions because they were stigmatized as "English." The masses of people thus became alienated. Methodism, then vigorous and aggressive, strongly appealed to the passions of the people. The landed gentry of the country still clung to the Church as the Church of their fathers.

They had intelligence sufficient to enable them to distinguish between the Church and the action of the British Government, which was so hateful to the colonists. But the zeal of the few remaining adherents to the Church was languid. They were uninstructed from Sunday to Sunday; they were rather disposed to fight for the Church than to live for it. With some few and striking exceptions, the state of things was as given here. You may judge of the low condition into which the Church had fallen from an incident which I had from Bishop Meade of Virginia. He, in connection with my father (William H. Wilmer, D.D., afterward president of William and Mary), and one or two other earnest men, made a united effort to revive the Church in Virginia.

They first united in calling Bishop Moore to be their Bishop. They took steps, also, to raise an endowment for a Theological seminary, and carried it through. The Theological seminary near Alexandria, Va., is the result of the effort then inaugurated, the instruction of students being first given in my father's house in Alexandria. Whilst going through Virginia, soliciting funds for this object, Bishop Meade (who was then a young man) applied among others, to Judge Marshall, Chief

Justice of the United States Supreme Court, for aid. The Judge replied that of course he would not withhold his contribution. It was his Church, and that of his forefathers, but he thought the idea of resuscitating it in Virginia was hopeless; and he expressed himself as full of regret that a young man of family and talent, as Bishop Meade was, should throw away his life in so quixotic an undertaking.

The "Old Chief," (as Judge Maashall was familiarly called among his intimates) did not live to see the glorious future, which has opened for the Church in Virginia from the dark and apparently hopeless condition in which he knew it. The clergy of Virginia can now be found in all countries of the world nearly. One of her sons is Bishop of Japan, another was a Bishop of Africa, and he succeeded a Virginian in that Bishoprick; seventeen of her sons, born on her soil, are, or have been Bishops of Dioceses in the United States.

DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS BODIES IN THE UNITED STATES.

NOW I desire to say something about the different religious bodies, with which you will come in contact, and to point out their characteristics and claims, and to show you your relation to them. It is most important that you understand these things,—first, that you may give an intelligent reason for your own position in Christendom, and, also, be prepared to instruct others in matters of so great concernment. That there should be divisions among Christian people is much to be deplored for every reason. Division runs counter to the mind of our Lord, whose prayer ever was, “Father, that they may be one as We are one.” Again, it breeds unholy contention and emulation, divides forces, and wastes energies; practically, it divides to a certain extent (and it is to that extent injurious) the Kingdom of God against itself.

The divided state of Christendom is gloried over in a certain kind of flash oratory, which describes the varied hues of a divided Christianity as a beau-

tiful kaleidoscopic picture, where are displayed all the prismatic hues of light,—forgetting that where the colors of the prism are exhibited it is in consequence of refraction, and does not present the pure light as it comes from Heaven. Or, as some others delight to view it, they picture the various Denominations as regiments or divisions of the grand army, fighting under one Captain—the great Captain of Salvation. All this sounds very pretty, and is sufficiently captivating to a certain sort of mind, but the lamentable fact is, that these several regiments, or divisions—call them what you will—are spending a large part of their strength and time in fighting and firing into each other. They have to keep three or four ministers in a little village (where the services of one good man would be sufficient) to watch each other and keep the balance of power even. At this moment, two-thirds of the ministers in the small villages might be sent to the heathen, to the great advantage of Christendom.

Time would fail me to enter into all the evils of schism. Yet we find great and good men among all the Denominations. We must not ignore that fact, nor that other great fact—that this goodness which we see in them is the fruit of the Divine Spirit, and the outcome of their union with Christ.

They could not else manifest as they do often, the fruits of the Spirit. These are the actual phenomena, with which we have to deal—to deal fairly and honestly. Hence, we are called upon to distinguish between men and their systems and organizations. The latter may be a mistake, a wrong, an injury; and yet, through the frailty of sinful man, good men may be earnestly, however mistakenly, working under them.

With some men, it is a lust of power, an ambitious spirit, a desire to exalt self. Divisions ordinarily spring from unruled lusts of ambitious men, good men, too, it may be, but not good enough to kill their ambition. With some other men, their denominational connections are the result of ignorance and shallowness; they really think they are promoting the purity of the Church by a wholesome rivalry. With the great mass of men, it is a matter of accident or of pure indifference. They do not care or think much about the matter.

Now, I hold—and have ever taught, both publicly and privately—that the divided state of Christendom is an evil of incalculable magnitude, and that it becomes every Christian man to do what in him lies to heal this breach. He cannot do it, in my judgment, by treating the evil lightly; nor by

contention and strife. The evil comes from the Evil One; the counteracting good must come from the Author and Giver of all goodness. All work for whatever good end, if not done in the Spirit of Christ, intensifies the evil sought to be remedied. It adds fuel to the fire, and feeds instead of quenching the flames. I hold—and have ever taught and preached it—that each Christian man should, so far as his intelligence goes, seek to know what is the truth in all this matter of a divided Christendom. The very spirit and desire to find out the truth is a good beginning, and will not end there in any earnest mind.

The difficulty would not long exist were men earnestly to go to work to find out the truth, with the love of the truth to inspire their search. One has no business to talk about any truth in any other spirit, no more than he would have a right to talk about the properties of angles, etc., unless he had learned something of Geometry. The good in an evil thing is often only apparent on the surface, the evil often poisons and corrupts the whole system.

But I am dwelling too long upon these generalities. I must come to a nearer and more tangible view of the subject; only observing at the out-

set, that every man, and every body of men, should give an account of themselves, when they came into being, and what good purpose they are subserving by continuance in being, in a word, the "*raison d'etre.*"

I take up first, the

ROMAN OR LATIN CHURCH.

I TAKE this Church first, because she is the largest Christian organization in the world and, furthermore, she claims to be the only legitimate, divinely-appointed communion of Christians on earth. You will meet the claims of Rome everywhere; in books, newspapers, schools, colleges, etc. A wonderful piece of mechanism it is, vast, complex, flexible and inflexible power, suited to all temperaments, adjusting itself to all idiosyncrasies, and, as regards the great "Society of Jesus," especially, politic, daring, or submissive, as the case may call for, to the last degree—alas! in what painful contrast with the simplicity of "the truth as it is in Jesus."

Rome is to-day pretty much what Jesuitism is, because Jesuitism, after having fought the world, and even the Bishops of Rome sometimes, and after having been expelled in turn from nearly all the countries of Europe, has achieved its present commanding position; gives counsel to Popes,

causes doctrines to be promulgated,—new doctrines—upon the same platform of authority with the ancient Creeds. Rome claims to be exclusively the Catholic Church.

The Church in England, as I have before written, was at one time under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome; so were all the churches of Western Europe. The Church in England is not so now; but Rome, none the less, asserts her claim, and promulgates decrees and dogmas as by divine warranty. Within my memory, she has taken a private opinion of individuals, and elevated it to the dignity of a fundamental dogma—"The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin."—Later still, and in my day, she has promulgated the dogma of the "Infallibility of the Pope,"—has done it formally; and her adherents, some of them reluctant, and some recalcitrant for a while, have either formally given in, or preserve a still silence. Strange,—and yet not strange—it is—that the promulgation of infallibility synchronized exactly with the passing away of all her temporal dominion.

This fact is exquisitely brought out by Mozley in his "University Sermons." I cannot forbear a single extract. He is speaking of the proclamation of the infallibility of the Pope at the moment

of his stepping down from the throne of temporal dominion. "Is not this," says Mozeley, "the act of a dispossessed monarch, who, upon the eve of the crisis, collects all his greatness about him, and prepares to quit his throne with a rigorous statement of his rights first put forth.' The claim represents former possession. Rome issues out of her own gates, taking her history with her; she collects her prestige, she gathers up the past, she calls in all the antecedents of her temporal greatness; she stereotypes memory in decrees; she condenses history into dogmas; she surrounds herself symbolically with all the insignia of her secular glory; A thousand banners and escutcheons are hid in one of those sentences which makes the *statement* of her dominion, in order to serve as a support to her in the loss of the fact. . . . All in vain! The Earth must roll back upon its axis before the moral sense of society recants on these questions. Never again, never, though ages pass away, never any more under the heavens, shall be seen forms, and fabrics and structures, and combinations that we have seen. They have taken their place among departed shapes and organisms, deposited in that vast mausoleum which receives, sooner or later, all human creations. The

mould in which they were made is broken, and their successors will be casts from a new mould. The world is evidently at the end of one era, and is entering upon another; but there will remain the Christian Creed and the Christian Church, to enlighten ignorance, to fight with sin, and to conduct man to eternity."

Upon what grounds, you may well ask, does Rome build her vast pretensions? Chiefly upon a declaration of our Lord to St. Peter: "Upon this rock I will build My Church,' etc." If the words mean what the Romanists affirm they do mean, there is no declaration that they confer any special or similar authority or privilege upon the Bishops of Rome. For, in the first place, it is a mooted point, whether St. Peter was ever Bishop of Rome. St. Paul certainly was there, and also wrote the "Epistle to the Romans."

But, besides, you must interpret the meaning of our Lord's declaration in the light of subsequent history. Is there any evidence to show that St. Peter claimed the pre-eminence said to have been conferred upon him in these quoted words, or that it was ever conceded to him by the other Apos-

* Mozeley's University Sermons, pp. 22-24.

bles? The contrary is the fact. Rome is not the "Mother" of Churches. Jerusalem, where the Christian Dispensation of the Church was inaugurated, is the "Mother Church." And you will observe that at the meeting of the first Council of the Church (Acts xv.) St. James, the first Bishop of Jerusalem, was the presiding Bishop; St. Peter merely giving his opinion as a member of the Council. St. Peter gave his *opinion, whereas* St. James concluded the deliberations of the Council by saying: "Wherefore my sentence is," thus announcing the judgment of that body—The First Church Council.

How can such a state of things be accounted for from the Romanists' position in regard to the so-called successors of St. Peter? It was many years before a Bishop of Rome claimed anything like supremacy; and the claim was never recognized by the Church Universal. The Oriental Churches never fell under the power of the Bishop of Rome. They exist to-day, and have existed from the beginning, apart from his sway. Therefore, it is the most shameless and groundless assumption—that of the claim of the Pope to universal supremacy and, as a corollary therefrom, to infallibility. When you read, as you will, in history, of the counter

decisions of the Bishops of Rome, and of the profligate lives of many of them (history records no worse characters than some of them), it is almost amusing, were the consequences less serious, to hear such announcements as are made of the power of the Pope. Flings at the English Church, because of Henry VIII.'s character, come with a bad grace from men who now, as a matter of salvation, must believe in the infallibility of a Borgia! Then, too, when you come to the matter of doctrine,—that of “transubstantiation,” the worship of the Blessed Virgin, the Roman Purgatory, etc.,—you, who have been instructed in the Word of God, can hardly be drawn away from the ancient faith into the mazes of Roman error.

The best antidote against all uncatholic doctrine is a thorough acquaintance with the Word of God, as interpreted and accepted by the Universal Church. It is a two-edged sword that guards in all directions the tree of life. Make it, my children, your book of counsel, the guide for time and eternity—health for body and soul.

Yet think not that I join in the popular and indiscriminating tirade against Rome. She has the Faith, though sadly disfigured, and enrolls among her children a goodly fellowship of saints and a

noble army of martyrs,—not, indeed, because of her errors, but in spite of them. In many things we might imitate the zeal and spirit of self-sacrifice so wonderfully illustrated in her communion. Roman Catholicism, in so far as it is true to the Catholic faith, is one thing, and worthy of all admiration. But Romanism as corrupted by *new* doctrines, and perverted by Jesuitism, which just now is in the ascendant, and dictates, as it is thought, the policy of that Church, is quite another thing.

Against all these uncatholic features of the Roman Church, this Church of ours enters her solemn protest. Hence she is called the “Protestant” Church, because she is so truly Catholic. Her Protestantism constitutes really the negative side of her Catholicity.

We do not profess our faith in “the Protestant Episcopal Church,” but in the “Holy Catholic Church.” And why? Because our faith cannot properly rest in any one branch of the Church. Any particular Church may err from the faith. Rome assuredly has; she has erred by unwarranted additions to the Faith; she imposes uncatholic conditions of communion and fellowship. We cannot fraternize with her, without accepting as true what is not true. Besides, she has excom-

municated us; we have never excommunicated her. The schism between us is not of our making, we are ready to meet her, and all Christendom upon the basis of Catholic truth—that which was always, every where and held by all—our faith being in the Holy Catholic Church, and, only using the appellation of “Protestant Episcopal” by way of designating a branch of the Church, and because it has a well-known doctrinal and historical significance; just as we designate continents and oceans and bays and rivers, to localize and distinguish them, but not to deny and lose sight of the fact that all these several divisions make up the great land and sea.

“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.”—“They shall prosper that love Thee.”

THE PRESBYTERIAN COMMUNION

IS a select, learned and most respectable communion of Christian people. Why is it called Presbyterian? To indicate the fact that their ministers are Presbyters merely, and that they recognize no office in the Church like that of our Bishops. That Denomination has precedence in Scotland, an existence in England and Ireland, in France and the United States, besides scattered congregations on the Continent and missions among the heathen.

Its history dates back no farther than the Reformation. There is no satisfactory record of a Church up to that era which was not ruled by Bishops. They claim that their ministerial government was instituted by the Apostles, but admit that it soon merged into the Episcopal form. It will strike any one as very strange that the Apostolic form of government (supposing for the sake of argument, that such was Presbyterian) should have lasted so short a time. There must have been a strong ten-

dency to Episcopacy in early Presbyterianism—such as does not exist now.

During the Apostolic era, the Church was, without controversy, governed by the Apostles. The first clear intimations of subsequent history give us Episcopal Churches everywhere. If any change ever took place from Presbyterianism to the Episcopal polity, as they allege, history does not record the fact nor the time. The truth is, that all this talk is purely conjectural, imaginary and hardly reasonable. If there is any truth in it, the burden of proof (positive) rests upon themselves. The whole stream of history is against the assertion. The analogy of nature, in its manifold headship, is against it. It is an afterthought altogether. Some of the most learned of the Reformers—notably Calvin—acknowledged the fact of Primitive Episcopacy, and he would have ingrafted the feature upon his system had it been practicable.

The history of Puritanism in England is a most suggestive one. It originated in a certain school of divines of the Church in England, who were enamoured of a more simple Ritual than that of the Church, and held stronger views of the doctrines of predestination and election, etc., than “The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion” justified. This

body of divines holding said views, at last, after many attempts had been made to pacify and harmonize them, went to themselves, established their standards—"The Confession of Faith," etc., and thus took a determinate departure from the historical Church in England and other countries.

They seemed to delight to run counter to every distinctive and characteristic feature of the Church:—we kneeled, they stood in prayer; we kneeled at the Holy Eucharist, they sat and partook; they objected to the surplice, to the sign of the cross in baptism, to the wedding ring, etc. So trivial were the grounds of their dissent, as you will see in any history of the times. But times are changed, and they have changed, as we all have changed somewhat with the times. No more do we hear of the peculiar doctrines of Presbyterianism.

The great Fatherhood of God, loving all His children, and shining like the sun on all His creatures, has relegated to the tombs all those narrow, harsh, repelling and appalling views of the Deity which came once from Presbyterian pulpits. They still sing "Hark, from the tombs," but the voice of the Easter-tide will drown that doleful cry after awhile.

Some of their best men are beginning to cry

aloud for a liturgical worship. After a while they will demand it. Their Sabbaths (Judaical as their's have been) will give way to the "Lord's Day," and they will sing *Te Deums* and *Glorias*, as other Christian people have done and will continue to do.

Why they keep up their distinctive organization it is hard to say. What truth they maintain distinctively cannot be pointed out. What special attraction there is in their mode of worship does not appear. They hold a great deal that is good, but they do not specially hold anything good that the historical Episcopal Church does not also hold. You may say, indeed, with truth, that distinctive Presbyterianism no longer exists save in its ministerial polity, and that cannot stand the test of history.

Chillingworth (in his "Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy Demonstrated") puts the allegation, on the part of the Presbyterians, that "Presbyterianism was ancient and Apostolic, but had run into Episcopacy" in a helpless condition. He says (p. 509) "When I shall see, therefore, all the fables in the *Metamorphoses* acted, and prove true stories, when I shall see all the Democracies and Aristocracies in the world lie down and sleep and awake into Mon-

archies, then will I begin to believe that Presbyterian government, having continued in the Church during the Apostles' time, should presently after (against the Apostles' doctrine and the will of Christ) be whirled about like a scene in a mask, and transformed into Episcopacy. In the meantime, while things remain thus incredible, and in human reason impossible, I hope I shall have leave to conclude thus: 'Episcopal government is acknowledged to have been universally received in the Church presently after the Apostles' times.' Between the Apostles and this 'presently after' there was not time enough for, nor possibility of, so great an alteration."

"And, therefore, there was no such alteration as is pretended. And, therefore, Episcopacy, being confessed to being so ancient and Catholic, must be granted, also, to be Apostolic. 'Quod erat demonstrandum.'"

The fact is, that Romanism and Presbyterianism, in some of their characteristics, are both uncatholic. They have more things in common than would be supposed at a first glance. They both undervalue Patristic learning and authority. Presbyterian ministers, although well educated in the general, are proverbially deficient in Patristic lore. They

find no comfort in reading the "Fathers," for they ever find "Episcopacy," and "Episcopacy" is most unsavory to them.

The Romanists, likewise, run away from the "Fathers" nowadays. They are always seeking proofs of the Pope's supremacy, and the "Fathers" did not know anything about so novel a doctrine. The English Church with her weighty artillery has driven the Roman controversialists out of their old intrenchments, and they are now seeking a new position of defence in the doctrine of "Development," which as practically interpreted by them, means, not development of truth revealed, but revelation of new truth. Newman and Manning have helped them on this new line, and are now feathering the darts aimed at the breast of their once dear Mother, the Church in England.

The only safety is in Catholic truth, and in the Apostolic order of the Church, which comes to us with the same universality of evidence that the Holy Scriptures themselves do—Catholic Consent, and he who disparages the idea of Catholic consent, disparages the very foundation upon which the Canon of Holy Scripture rests for its authenticity.

But the vital matter for men to know, amid all

these controversies, is this,—that spiritual life comes from the indwelling of the Divine Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life. He dwells in men, despite many opposing infirmities, errors and sins, else would He not dwell in any one of us. How far a man may go in error or sin, without quenching the life of the soul, is not revealed. We may not expect in this our earthly pilgrimage to live without these clogging errors and faults, but let it be our aim really to live. It matters little what a dead man believes,—there is not much difference in dead things;—they are all putting on corruption. But there is, on the contrary, a vast difference in living things. The nearer one lives in the truth and up to the truth, the more of a man is he, and the higher his possible usefulness and destiny.

Therefore, my children, strive to walk in the truth, and with boundless compassion for the ignorant and erring,—it is not difficult for any one who fully realizes his own frailty and fallibility.

THE BAPTISTS.

THEY are a very large Denomination in this country, but do not exercise the same power with the Methodists, because they lack compactness and unity in their organization. They sprang up about the time of the Lutheran Reformation, and in some places they were turbulent and very heady, as Luther testified. They were the rude Reformers of that Day.

In their polity, they are “Independents” and “Congregationalists;”—each congregation containing within itself governmental powers—each congregation an autonomy. They form among themselves what they style “Associations;” but these are purely voluntary, and are clothed with very limited powers.

Their boast is, that they possess “no written creed;” they do not baptize children, and they regard immersion as the only valid baptism—indeed as alone baptism. They ignore the question of the ministry pretty much, and attach a supreme im-

portance to two things—"No children baptized," and "adult believers alone to be baptized, and by immersion." They have among them some quite distinguished and learned men, but as a Denomination, viewed in the large, their preachers and people are much less informed than the majority of the other sects. Of late, they are earnest promoters of education. They are exclusive,—would be called very High Church among us,—but by their fraternizations with other Christian people in preachings, etc., they get credit among the unthinking for a liberality which is not deserved; for they will not commune with their fellow Christians, and they will repel them from their communion-tables. The Holy Scriptures they profess to take as their sole guide, and ignore all idea of the Catholic Church as an interpreter of divine truth. Hence, they have no written creed, and glory in the fact; although they hold certain opinions as unquestionably true; and it is hard for any one to see what is the difference between a *spoken* and a *written* Creed. The Creed of every man is what he believes to be true; and whether he writes it down, or lets it float in speech, it is none the less a Creed; although, being unwritten and unrehearsed, it is more liable to easy change. What idea can

you form of one's faith, when he says, "I believe in the Holy Scriptures?"

The arguments of the Baptists are plausible to a certain extent among the ignorant; and they beguile—not to deny much knowledge among their learned men—a great multitude of ignorant and really good people.

I cannot pretend to go at length into the matters of difference between us and them. There are a great many good and satisfactory books, which, if you should ever happen to need, you can consult. Among them I name one, written by Dr. Hodges, an old friend of mine, entitled, "Baptism, tested by Scripture and History,"—an argument, in my judgment, unanswerable. I merely touch a few points.

The Baptists reject infant baptism, alleging two principal objections—(first), that the Scriptures do not in so many words "command children to be baptized," and (second) that children are incapable of receiving any benefit therefrom. Whereas, on the contrary,—as you will see more at length in the book referred to—children are always treated of in Holy Scripture as belonging to the Church. They were circumcised into it under the Jewish Dispensation, and, when families and households were brought into the Christian fold, they were baptized

as "households." Furthermore, our Lord gave it as a reason why His disciples should not bar the approach of children to Himself, that "of such is the Kingdom of God," which is the Church of God; and we know of no way of becoming members of the Kingdom of God save by baptism.

Besides, the comparative silence of Scripture (if Scripture can truly be said to be silent in regard to the matter) is very significant. We do not commonly say much about settled and indisputable facts. The relation of the children to the Church was so universally recognized as a fact, a fact not disputed, that there was little occasion to refer to it in the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles. Yet there is just that mention of it and the implication of its existence that we should expect to find,—the Shepherd's tender care of the little ones of His fold, His taking them in His arms, His declaring them "blessed," His provision for their nurture in His parting injunctions to His disciples, "Feed My lambs."

In addition to this weighty testimony of Holy Scripture, we have the universal custom of the Church, not seriously disputed for centuries—a fact of deep significance to every one who understands

that he receives the Holy Scriptures themselves upon the same testimony.

Think of a flock of sheep without any lambs in it. It would be absolutely ludicrous, were it not at the same time so painful. The Gospel did little for the Jews, if it took the men and the women into the Church, and left the children out; and that, too, when the Lord of the Kingdom says that "of such is the Kingdom." Really, to one acquainted with all the grounds of, and reasons for, infant baptism, as appearing from the Scripture alone, it is difficult to understand how a thinking and learned man can be a Baptist. Yet there are such men who are conscientious Baptists. Then, when you add to this the whole force of Catholic consent through ages, it becomes a wonder greater still. Where in ancient history do you find Baptist Churches?

But the main difficulty in the mind of a Baptist is in the thought that "children can receive no benefit from baptism." This difficulty arises altogether out of a misconception of the nature of baptism. The Baptist regards the sacrament as involving too exclusively what *man* has to do in the matter. We, on the contrary, regard it chiefly as something that God does for man. It is not

simply the profession of one's faith, but a reception into the Kingdom,—into the family of Heaven. Our birth of the flesh is our entrance into creation ; it puts us among God's creatures, in the great Kingdom of Nature, whereas, our Baptism is our introduction into God's family, and is, therefore, properly and significantly styled our " Regeneration, our new birth, our second birth, our adoption and incorporation into the mystical body of our dear Lord."

Now, we all admit that children can become citizens of another Kingdom than that in which they were born. They can be made partakers of all the privileges of citizenship, in so far as minors can exercise them, or they can be exercised in their behalf. They can receive the benefit of all properties given, and they can have the protection of the law, and the right of having guardianship, etc. In a word, they can have all the substantial benefits of citizenship, whilst yet they are all unconscious. What man would reject an inheritance for his child because the child could not understand the value of the gift ?

Furthermore, when they shall have reached years of discretion, they can say whether they will confirm and ratify the deed of their parents, and

confirm the citizenship given them by their parents, and thus give a deep significance to their confirmation. All this the Baptist ignores,—honestly, I doubt not, but still actually. He took up his Bible, and went to work to make out a scheme of Church Polity for himself anew, never sufficiently considering that the Church already existed—a Church that had brought to him the very Scriptures which he was using, as if a new revelation, not only separating himself from its government and guidance, but from its communion, and the church members from communion with himself. He thus created a schism in the body, and established a sect in its very idea schismatical. If the Baptist idea of the Church be well founded, then, for centuries, Christ had no Church on earth: and then, of course, the Church had failed for that long period of time; and yet of that Kingdom there was to be “no end.”

Such are the conclusions necessarily and actually involved in the position of the Baptist. He does not sufficiently consider (and in this he is not alone) that the Church antedates the written Word of the New Testament, and that these Scriptures were written to meet the wants of an existing Church. The Epistles were addressed to the various Churches.

The Gospels are histories of our Lord's deeds and words, and, of course, were written after the events which they record; and therefore it is that we have to go to the Church to find out what is the Word of God. These are very simple facts, but unknown to, and unweighed by, great numbers of men, who, in some other respects, are quite intelligent and well informed.

The ultimate fate of the Baptist, as regards the preservation of "the faith," it would be hard to predict. His want of a fixed Creed and Liturgy deprives him of a great security against error. His congregational character bereaves him of a great deal of good, and restraint and guidance that comes from mutual helpfulness. His extravagant reliance upon individual interpretations of Scripture opens the way to an unlimited number of sects, between whom there exists only the one tie—of immersion in water and "infants rejected."

The name of the Baptist sects is becoming "Legion." The "Campbellites" or ("Disciples," they claim to be called) is one of their most prominent off-shoots; as yet but little known in the world at large, but numerous and aggressive wherever they have made a lodgement. Individualism bursts into full bloom under their favoring

auspices. Every man can be a preacher, and every woman, if she claims the privilege. With no established creed, and unlicensed power to interpret Scripture, there must be as many actual creeds as there are divergent opinions; with no protection, that appears, from the most fatal heresy. The atmosphere around them in some localities will keep them orthodox longer than their system would warrant.

My children, adhere steadfastly to a communion which holds a fixed faith, and breathes it in every note of prayer and praise.

IMMERSION.

PERHAPS, I ought to say a word about what the Baptists claim for "immersion." I feel that I am touching what is a matter of small moment in itself, but yet I must recognize it as having importance, because so much is made of it, to the prejudice of many tender consciences and weak minds. To a Churchman it can hardly become a practical question, for his first concern would be to know if the minister proposing to baptize him had any commission thereto. The Baptists are always arguing the point of "how to baptize;" leaving out of view the question, "Who is empowered to baptize?" Yet the matter of immersion troubles some people, and huge volumes of immense research have been evoked by the water controversy. To me it appears like the question, "How much wax is to be put upon your seal, in order to give validity to its impress?" It tends, moreover, to withdraw the mind from the sacramental idea to the material one. It is a small matter, it would seem, whether the

water goes over the subject, or the subject goes under the water.

It makes one sick to think how men can wrangle over such questions. They surely have never divined the true idea of a Sacrament, which is "the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace." One may as well contend that one must eat a full meal in order to receive the Lord's Supper, as to argue that you must be drenched in order to be baptized.

Without entering at large into the question, which would take me quite beyond my limits, I content myself with saying that the quantity of water is quite an immaterial part of the Sacrament (the Church manifests her characteristic wisdom and benignity in allowing both modes); that the practice of affusion seems to have been, as I fully believe it was, the primitive mode; that there are accounts in Scripture of baptisms, where immersion was scarcely possible; that affusion can be practiced everywhere, among all nations, in all climes and localities; that immersion, in some climes and localities and seasons, is impracticable, and that, therefore, it is more reasonable to suppose that, where an ordinance was to be of universal obligation, the mode of its administration would

properly be one of universal practicability; it being in accord with the analogy of God's dealings to accommodate the Divine requirements to human necessities; that baptism, being made (equally with the Sabbath) "for man," the mode thereof would likewise be adapted with the same wise and benignant accommodation to all men, in all climes, and under all circumstances.

Looking at the whole matter from this larger view-point, the insisting upon a special mode of receiving men into Christ's Kingdom,—which is never decorous, as in the case of woman; sometimes harsh, as amid the rigors of winter; sometimes impracticable, as in countries where little water is to be found—is not a reasonable thing, and is not in harmony with the genius of the Gospel of our Lord.

Strange it is that some good and reputed great men take quite the opposite view. They see nothing in the Scripture accounts but immersion, immersion; whether in the crowded streets of Jerusalem, where thousands were unexpectedly baptised, or in the jail at Philippi at midnight, they always imagine full fountains and overflowing streams. Even in the peoples flocking to "Enon, near to Salem, where much water was," the prac-

ticability of immersing appears to be the first moving cause to these brethren, who look at all these accounts through a water lens. They never stop to ask, how little water would suffice to baptize many men?—(a good-sized Baptistery would suffice—) and how much water would be required to quench the thirst of a thousand camels upon which the people went to “Enon?”; ten camels requiring more for their satisfaction than would a thousand men for baptism by immersion.

The Baptist theory of essential immersion—stands out in the whole scheme of Redemption, not grand indeed to my vision, but solitary and peculiar, often harsh, and, in some instances, impracticable. Happily it has made itself exclusive. The worst thing about it is, that it often becomes the “fetich” to the ignorant white and black man. It satisfies his senses to the full. He is all over a Christian when dipped. In a great number of cases, it ends the whole matter. His teachers do not believe or tell him any such thing, I am well assured, but the extravagant stress which they put upon the “dipping,”—a process which separates him from all other Christians, and all other Christians from himself—naturally produces the result in weak and ignorant people.

THE METHODISTS.

THE Methodists constitute a very large and influential body in the United States, and exist as a Denomination in Great Britain and her Dependencies, and have missions in foreign lands. Their government is Episcopal, made so by the assumption of the Episcopal functions on the part of two of their Presbyters, who had been sent out to the American Colonies by John Wesley, the founder of the sect.

Much controversy has arisen as to the intentions of John Wesley. There is evidence enough to show that he did not intend to form a Sect in England, apart from the Church in England where there was a National Church established; and, yet, there is also evidence to show that he did contemplate the organization of a distinct Sect in the American Colonies; although he disapproved of the assumption of the Episcopate by Drs. Coke and Asbury, his superintendents in the Colonies;

and held it up—as it deserved to be—to ridicule. He writes—“ Call me a knave, dear Franky (Dr. Francis Asbury—,) but not a Bishop.”*

“ LONDON, Sept. 20, 1788.

“There is, indeed, a wide difference between the relation wherein you stand to the Americans, and the relation wherein I stand to *all* the Methodists. You are the elder brother of the American Methodists; I am, under God, the father of the whole family. Therefore, I naturally care for you all, in a manner no other person can do. Therefore, I, in a measure, provide for you all; for the supplies which Dr. Coke provides for you, he could not provide, were it not for me—were it not that I not only permit him to collect, but support him in so doing.

“But in one point, my dear brother, I am a little afraid both the Dr. and you differ from me. I study to be *little*, you study to be *great*; I *creep*, you *strut* along; I found a *school*, you a college; nay, and call it after your own names! Oh, beware! Do not seek to be something! Let me be nothing, and Christ be all in all.

“One instance of this, your greatness, has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you, suffer yourself to be called a ‘*Bishop*’?”

* Extract from Wesley’s Letter to Asbury, September, 20, 1788. (see Moore’s Life of Wesley, vol. 2, p. 285.)

“I shudder, I start at the very thought. Men may call me a *knave*, or a *fool*; a *rascal*, a *scoundrel*, and I am content; but they shall never, by my consent, call me a Bishop! For my sake, for God’s sake, for Christ’s sake, put a full end to this! Let the Presbyterians do what they please, but let the Methodists know their calling better. Thus, my dear Franky, I have told you all that is in my heart; and let this, when I am no more seen, bear witness how sincerely,

“I am your affectionate friend and brother,

JOHN WESLEY.”

Wesley had the sense and churchmanship to know that he, a Presbyterian, could not make a Bishop. But Wesley’s intentions,—whatever they may be claimed to be, or proved to be,—are of no moment; for the question is one of *authority*, not of *Wesley’s intention*.

The founders of Methodism were men of zeal, earnestness, and power. They preached with unction some of the great truths of the Gospel, and encouraged the emotional element to a great and enthusiastic degree. The low condition of piety in the Church of England at the time greatly favored the growth of the sect. Had the English Church acted with the wisdom and forecast, which

have marked her more recent administration, Methodism might have been utilized and controlled. The Church of England greatly needed a stimulus. But unwise councils prevailed; and the Methodists, especially in the United States, took a determinate movement away from the Apostolic Church. Wesley himself never left the ministry of the Church.

His followers very early took ground against domestic slavery; and the pressure of this question had divided the body into "Methodists North," and "Methodists South" before the breaking out of the civil war. So great was the mutual repulsion on the part of the two bodies thus divided, that they have never yet been able to come together in legislative union, notwithstanding the fact that slavery—the original cause of the division—no longer exists. Unhappily, the Methodists have become, in the Northern States, too much of a political power, and candidates for the Presidency find it to their interest to play into their hands. As they have gained in political power, they seem to have declined in piety and religious zeal (I refer now to the Methodist Church North), and are gradually losing some of their strictest notions of certain matters pertain-

ing to dress, amusements and the like,—the ultimate fate of all Puritanism.

Their organization is one of great power, and through their varied functionaries, they manage to move the whole body of the Communion by the will of a few leaders. Two of their conferences thanked Congress for impeaching President Andrew Johnson before his trial took place. In some particulars they are more like the Church in England and her daughter in America, than any of the Denominations. They still retain a considerable portion of the Book of Common Prayer, in a mutilated form, and they use it at funerals, marriages, baptisms, and celebrations of the Lord's Supper; thus showing, that, when they wish to draw especially near unto God, they resort to the use of a form. But yet, at the same time, it is the fashion of some of their preaching to declaim vehemently against the use of forms in worship. Such is man's inconsistency.

They cannot be said to have any "distinctive denominational principles," — as do the Baptists,—but owe their growth and extension to their zeal and diligence, which I have ever admired in them, and am glad to recognize at all times.

Their founders,—Wesley, Whitefield, etc.,—were

men of power ; and they were all brought up in the Church in England, and taught by Church mothers in the Church catechism, baptized, confirmed and ordained in the ministry of the Church in England.

Some years ago, a party rose up among them which protested against having Bishops, and also claimed that laymen should have a voice in their legislative bodies. It is surprising that, with the last named claim to popular favor, the "Protestant Methodists"—for such is their name—should not have had a larger following ; but they have never become a large body ; and now that the Episcopal Methodists have admitted to some extent lay representation, they appear to have lost much of their original prestige, and will probably die out.

CONCLUSION OF MATTERS PERTAINING TO RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS.

A WORD more just here in regard to the Protestant Episcopal Church—the Church of my forefathers, so far as any records go. My descendants will find, as I have found, that the Church of their fore-fathers presents to them all that man needs to enable him to live a religious life, and at the same time to maintain that individuality and freedom of thought without which religion can have no charm and no enduring power. She gives us the Ministry in unbroken line from Apostolic days, and the Catholic Creeds, and none other, as the doctrinal conditions of communion. She gives us for our rule of life the commandments of God and the precepts of Christ. She leaves it to “Societies” to add to the Faith and the Law. She provides a mode of worship, simple, majestic and reverential, wherein all men's needs are provided

for, and the great and good God is worshipped “in the beauty of holiness.”

In her legislative action, there is guaranteed, as far as human sagacity can guarantee anything, safety and protection for all who come within the reach of her authority. The Constitution and Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States are, in my judgment, and that of wiser men than I am, the justest and most conservative body of laws and canons that have ever been framed by man. Every order and estate of men in the Church is cared for, and thus Class legislation is impossible under her system.

Her whole history has been marked by so much wisdom, moderation and conservatism, that wise, moderate, and conservative men have been drawn to her by elective affinity. What a record is the roll of her children!

Her teachings are especially adapted to enlighten the ignorant, to raise up the lowly, and keep down the proud. Hence, the multitude love to go where they can be exalted. I desire no higher honor than to have my name registered in her roll. I ask no greater security for my children than that they may be found faithful and loyal in her ranks. I have no higher ambition than to be found at the

last day among her true followers. For my brethren and companions' sake I wish her prosperity. "Above my chief joy, I prefer Her, — Jerusalem, my Mother!"

Let me say a word just here. There are some few in our communion, who manifest an undisguised aversion to the Protestant character of our Church. The desire to drop the name of "Protestant" is with some, I fear, the indication of this aversion. If I thought this was the underlying *animus* of all who favored the change, I should strive to retain the name at all hazards; because the conflict then would be for principle, and the name would be the flag around which every true son of the Church should rally.

There are some in our midst who decry the "Reformation," and disparage the great "Reformers." I have only one word for them. As I view the matter, they are not honest to their vow, "to preach the Gospel as Christ has commanded and this Church has received the same." We have a pure and majestic ritual; let us not ape any other system. Some scientists think that men descended from the monkey. I have not witnessed that phenomenon, but every now and then, I am satisfied that I have seen a man descend to the monkey. I

heard the Bishop of Sodor and Man make a speech at Wolverhampton, England, some twenty years ago. He concluded by saying, "Finally, my brethren, beware of monks and monkeys." For my part I would rather see a man a monk than a monkey; and I occasionally suggest to some youthful specimens of the latter species, "If you don't like the 'Reformed Church,' the 'unreformed' Church has its doors open to receive you. Go home! In the name of truth, sincerity and decency, so far as in you lies, be what you purport to be. Use the language of the Bible and of your mother, the Church, and speak not in dubious and long since discarded phraseology of 'masses,' "etc.

Sometimes, when I hear of a certain kind of priests bewailing the Reformation, and using such phrases as "wretched Latimer," etc., the doubt will rise in my mind whether such men would not prefer to have piled additional fagots about the stake, rather than to have gone up with those glorious martyrs in chariots of fire to Paradise.

SCEPTICISM, RATIONALISM AND SCIENTISM.

I HAVE thrown these three together for convenient handling, and not at all to ignore or confound the distinctions between them. Just now they seem to be playing into each other's hands; and by their "flocking together," they seem to be in some sort "birds of a feather." The rampant spirit of rationalism in common life, in the public press, and, sad to say, in the pulpit and at the altar, allies itself with a vaunting scientism, and together they have engendered a spirit of scepticism, which threatens the very existence of the faith itself. When do you find the spirit of a Newton and Bacon, accepting alike—with a childlike mind,—the only safe mind,—the teachings of Revelation and the conclusions of a stern inductive philosophy?

Bacon truly and grandly said that "the entrance into the Kingdom of God and into the realms of science demanded the self-same spirit—'that of the child.'"

I wish above all else,—for my children—that they shall believe in Christ. If there is no reality in Christ, then our life goes out in darkness;—I leave my children without the Sun, and I take my leap in the dark. But you will perhaps say, “What must I believe?” “There is so much diversity of opinion.” “What is Truth?” I answer, Christ is—“The Truth;” “Christianity—a term not known to Revelation—is but vague and uncertain; “Christ” is one and the same, “yesterday, to-day and forever:”—of this more anon.

If you take a superficial view of the distracted condition of Christendom, you will be tempted at times to think that there must be some serious cause for uncertainty, where there is so much diversity of opinion. Not so—a deeper view will bring you to a sounder conclusion. Let me illustrate my meaning. Suppose that a dozen men are called to the witness-stand to testify in a given case. They all differ, we will suppose, in their testimony upon certain immaterial points of evidence; but upon certain other points, vital and fundamental, as all confess, they all agree. What conclusion would you come to? Naturally and reasonably, I think, to this conclusion; viz.—that the matters upon which they are all agreed are

fully proven, and not less fully proven because of their diversity of statement of certain other particulars,—indeed, more satisfactorily proven because of that diversity,—the diversity going to show that there was no collusion among the witnesses.

Now apply this illustration. Nearly all Christian people, of whatever name, are agreed upon the matters of faith set forth in the Creeds of the Church. (The exceptions are so small as to be inappreciable in a large and comprehensive view of Christendom). Now these Creeds contain the vital facts of the Christian faith,—the Fatherhood of God, the Incarnation and Atonement of Christ, and the Personality of the Holy Spirit, the Life-Giver, Sanctifier and Comforter. The truths set forth in these Creeds are so vital and all-pervading that a belief in them entitles such believer (so far as his faith is concerned) to Baptism and membership in Christ. The Christian peoples affirming this faith are divided among themselves in many points,—points of religious opinion, Ritual, Polity and Usages,—but they are *one in "The Faith."* Christendom presents from this point of view an undivided front. The main line of the Church Militant is unbroken, notwithstanding a few divisions have been routed and scattered, or captured. What then be-

comes of the argument used by infidels and scoffers that they know not what to believe, in view of the divided condition of Christianity? If they will accept only the faith in which Christendom is united, and accept it as rational beings should accept such a faith, they will be good Christians.

Moreover, as it regards morals, — all Christians are united in accepting the law of God, interpreted by Christ, as the rule of a Christian man's life. Let any man live up to those precepts of Christ, which all Christendom accepts, and he will live a godly and Christian life.

How strong, then, and hitherto unassailable, is the line held by the Church Militant, — “the blessed company of all faithful people.” I might pause here to note how weak, lamentable, foolish, and wicked a thing it is for any Christian man to do anything to weaken the strength of this line by needless and ambitious divisions, but this is aside from my present purpose.

Infidelity, in every age of the world, has planted itself for the overthrow of Christianity — as yet, without any serious break of the line of Christian truth. Every argument that the wit of man and the malice of the Adversary could devise has been levelled against it, — so far without success. Every

new discovery in science has been peered into to find a weapon with which to attack the intrenchments. The Heavens have been scaled, the Ocean sounded, the bowels of the Earth have been ransacked, with the same hostile intent. Jews, Turks, infidels, heretics, and scientists have made common cause against that system which will yield to none, and would fain save all. Yet The Faith still survives and triumphs. A wonderful and sublime spectacle it is indeed, inspiring and strengthening the faith of all who declare that of "this Kingdom there shall be no end."

Modern scientism, with the same intent, has gone to work, with a diligence, eloquence, and research, worthy of a better cause, to batter down the walls hitherto impregnable. Its highest achievements, were it to accomplish its purpose, would be to deprive man of God's Fatherhood, quench the light of revealed truth, destroy all hope of immortality, and range the race of men among the brute creation, — an animal only of a higher order.

It is a matter of profound interest to inquire, whence this spirit was evoked which would bring such a blight upon the fair creation? If it were the necessary conclusion of science, which it is not

one would think it would be reached at least with a sigh or a moan. But there are men, who can render the whole world Fatherless without a sigh; extinguish every hope beyond the grave without a pang; and dissolve the faith of centuries without a tear, alas! I have no quarrel with science. Christianity has none. Her sphere never traverses the orbit in which science has its being. Science, truly so-called, is the handmaid of revealed truth. It is the "oppositions of science, falsely so-called," which as even in past ages we have to encounter now. Where Science stops, having reached its uttermost verge, and finds forces and powers which elude investigation, and baffle all inquiry, there Revelation begins, and discloses to faith the Divine Fatherhood in the Great Creator, in whom all things "live, move and have their being."

The present favorite theory of what are called "advanced" scientists, is that of Evolution, not development, which latter is always in manifest working. Under this theory of evolution not only the lower creation, but man himself, mind and all, is the product of an endless series of growths from an original germ,—they call it "Protoplasm." There would be no serious objection to this theory, if it had any adequate proof to sustain it; but, so far,

it is announced and heralded without sufficient credentials.

Now, no scientific theory can claim our acceptance until it has received what we may call "catholic (universal) consent." The same rule, you will observe, holds in regard to scientific truth as to revealed truth. The theory of evolution has not received universal acceptance, even among scientific men. Astronomy *is a science*—has its fixed laws, and prevails by catholic consent. It is not yet so with Evolution: it is still under trial and investigation. The scientist, as does the sectarian, flies off from the "catholic system" of established truth, and attaches himself to a "school" of thought. Like the sectist, he parades his individuality, and founds a sect in philosophy. Meanwhile, you can afford to wait for the Conclusions of *Science*. Receive them as true, and adjust yourselves to their logical requirements.

If the theory of Evolution was true, they have only removed the difficulty a step farther back. They have not quit themselves of the necessity of an original Creator. For whether the Creator, by virtue of His omnipotent power, created all things after the *genera* in which they now exist, or created the original material, out of which all things

were successively evolved, there is equally a necessity for an original *creative act*. Therefore, Evolution—if it were true as a theory, and proved to be true by induction—could not affect the truth of the being of a God,—the first truth in natural as in revealed religion.

Therefore, in so far as the existence of a God is concerned, they, the theorists, may safely go on with their theories, but they will ever find, and find it pretty soon, a force, a life, or whatever they may choose to call it, permeating all things, explaining all things,—itself inexplicable. They call it the “*unknowable*.” They have reached the end of their line; it has run itself out, but they have not touched bottom. Yet they vaunt themselves upon having found the “unknowable.” One would think they would be touched with something of humility and reverence, but I have failed to see that spirit—rather that of vanity,—strange that man’s vanity should be inflated by the discovery of his ignorance!

Practically, however, the theories of the modern scientist have tended, in a great many minds, to obliterate the sense of a God, and to diminish faith in all Divine Revelation. This is its practical outcome among great numbers, showing, I think, how

easily people will become credulous when they have no faith; how, having not the truth, they will clutch at its caricature. I have read much of the writings of these men. They seem to be what we call *smart men*; they do not strike me as *profound* men. They do not impress me as Plato and Aristotle and Shakespeare and Bacon impress me. They seem, in comparison, to theorize and chatter. I have great sympathy with a modern writer who is reported to have said, "I am content to find my ancestors in the Garden of Eden. Let those who prefer otherwise, seek theirs in the "Zoological Gardens."

But one thing they do;—and for that, all good and true men must hold them accountable; if at no other bar, at the bar of decorum and reason. Their influence goes to destroy alike the sense of God, and to lower the dignity and responsibility of man. The revealed Word—which I cannot throw away for the sake of an unproven theory—the revealed Word, I say, proclaims that at creation, God made man, and made him as He made nothing else; did not evolve him by gradual processes from lowest germs, but made him after His own image, and endowed him after His own likeness. I cannot throw away that truth, with all

that it involves of human dignity and possible immortality, for an undemonstrated theory. Surely, what St. Paul said of the heathen of his day is true of the heathen now in our midst, "they did not like to retain God in their knowledge." O my children! Come not ye in their assembly; unite not your honor to such as these. These men are not blessing their race by any moral earnestness. They are not founding your homes for the destitute, the widow and the fatherless. They are prating;—"ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth." Learn the principles of Science, (as Newton and Bacon taught them), and you will never be beguiled by theories of scientism.

Evolutionists of the most advanced school tell us that man, starting from the simplest forms of matter,—mind itself being but "a mode of brain motion,"—as they assert, and evolving by gradual processes, is moving on to perfection; that thus, finally, all evils will be rectified, all disorders adjusted, all rights recognized, and the regeneration of society fully accomplished. The antagonisms and discontent of the laboring classes, the struggles of woman for what she claims as her rightful co-ordination in human affairs, etc., all these are

triumphantly pointed to as indications of the progress of society towards its perfect consummation. In all such prognostications, the influence of the Christian religion is by some disparaged, by some ignored, and by others utterly repudiated as a superstition, barring the way to a more rapid progress. These men glory in the fact that they have nothing to do with anything save "phenomena;" and, by that expression, they mean the phenomena of the material world, counting nothing real, save that which is material.

Yet there are phenomena in the world of mind, which cannot rationally be ignored, and which must be considered, classified and explained. There are questions which force themselves upon the mind, and which must be answered in some way. They demand an answer. Such a question is this, for example, "What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He?" It will not do to say that this question is irrelevant to the scientific mind. He stands face to face with this undeniable and pregnant fact, that, only in those parts of the Earth, where the Christian religion prevails, is there any marked advancement, even in science and in the industries and arts of life; and that the only heathen nations which are now manifesting signs of awakening life

—as China and Japan—are those which have felt the quickening influences of contact with Christian peoples. This question, and other questions of similar import, cannot be contemptuously thrust aside, and relegated to the “domain of metaphysical investigation.” They are matters of fact (great problems to be solved)—as much so as any in the domain of physics ; and are quite as worthy of observation as the anatomy and habits of bugs and reptiles.

The indifference of some so-called wise men to the study of “Final causes” is to me an astounding phenomenon, and causes one often to doubt whether every man is indeed a truly rational being. I met with a disciple of this school some time ago. Such men abound nowadays ;—smart, indeed, but not very profound ; dealing with the surface of questions, and contemptuously ignoring all consideration of the final causes of things visible or invisible. We fell into discourse upon religious matters. I urged upon him the importance of considering such matters. He replied that he had “no faith whatever in Christianity ; that he had read volume upon volume on Christian evidences, but they had made no impression on his mind,” and concluded by saying “that it was not worth while for

us to argue the matter, because there "was no common ground from which we could start." I then asked him if he "did not think it the duty of every man to try to bring himself, by culture and labor, to his highest possible perfection?" "Unquestionably," he replied. "Well then," said I, "here is a ground we can both start from. Now, in the effort to bring your character to its highest perfection, must you not have some rule, standard or model by which to work? The artist who wishes to make a representation of some object in nature, say a tree, or horse, seeks out the best specimen of such object, and aims to reproduce it, does he not?" "Yes," he said, "assuredly." "Then," I urged, "in trying to bring yourself up to your highest capability, would you not, for like reason, cast about you for the best specimen of human character, in order that you might have the advantage of a model to work by? You would not reasonably look within yourself for the ideal man. The effort to make yourself a better man implies, that, as yet, you know yourself to be an imperfect one. In making yourself the ideal, you would be only repeating and reproducing yourself, would you not?" "No," said he, "I would not look to myself, I would take some better specimen than myself for a

model. I would properly take the best man that I knew, and try to imitate his virtues." "Now," I urged, "who is the best man that ever lived?" "I know of but one man without sin," he very reverently said. "Who was that man?" "Jesus Christ." "Then, does it not follow from what you have admitted, that, in the effort to perfect your character, you should set before you for imitation Jesus Christ?" "I see no way of evading the conclusion," he admitted, "but I did not anticipate reaching such a conclusion."

There is no way by which the above conclusion can be evaded, save by denying the supreme excellence of Christ: and to this depth the dreariest infidelity has rarely fallen. Surely the man of science, the sociologist, the philanthropist, can join in with the devout believer, in his most exalted mood, and all with one acclaim crown Him the Christ, Chief of all, "*the One among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely.*"

In this connection, let me further press this point,—viz, that the scientists, *even from their standpoint*, are bound to meet the great question of questions, "What think ye of Christ; whose Son is He?" For if it be true, as they affirm, that man has been evolved from the lowest forms of matter, and is to

ascend by continued evolution, to his highest perfection, how did it happen that the most perfect specimen of manhood appeared at the beginning of the Christian era?—assuredly not the most advanced era in history. According to the accepted system of the philosophers of this school, Christ should have appeared at the culminating point in evolution, and not at the inauguration of His era. How came He to antedate the final consummation? He has certainly done so. Every advancement in morals and social order at the present day is but an approximation—as yet, faint indeed—to the style of human life which He set forth in His teachings and exemplified in person. All the beneficence of this, the most beneficent age of the world—in its care for the diseased, the destitute, and the outcast—finds its spirit and impersonation in Him, Who “went about doing good.” He is the luminous point in all history. His influence is the greatest known. His birth constituted a new era in time. All that man in the times before him knew of the rights and humanities of life was in Christ renewed, enlarged, illuminated; with much added that they knew not of. All that man has truly taught since, and is now truly teaching, of the relative duties of life, can be found in His pre-

cepts and exemplified in His sublime life. The observance by all men of the Christian rule of life would bring about, confessedly, a millennial age. Prophets converge in Him; Apostles radiate from Him. At this hour, the better part of the world, as it moves on and forward, looks back to Him for guidance, as oarsmen, propelling the boat, ever look back, as they row, to their helmsman. When human nature shall have reached its possible perfection, it will be because it has been more and more imbued with the spirit of Christ. Wars between capital and labor, jealousies of caste, social antagonisms, and all wrongs will cease when men shall belike Christ, when the laws of trade shall be superceded by the law of love, and every man shall "love his neighbor as himself." "Love worketh no ill; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

Now, let the men of science answer the question concerning Christ, "Whose Son is He?" They cannot answer it from their standpoint. Their doctrine of Heredity furnishes no clue to *His* parentage. From what they know they must let that question rest in still silence.

But take the Christian view,—that, not by natural generation, but by a supernatural Incarnation

—the Word of God becoming flesh—He, the Son of God—that is His Heredity—came among men,—then all these questions, which cannot otherwise be explained, are fully answered. St. Philip said to the Master, “Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth.” Yes, it sufficeth,—it covers the whole area of human need. The cry of Philip is the cry of suffering Humanity, “Show us the Father.” The answer which came back from Christ, responsive to this cry, is the crowning knowledge to poor struggling and weary man. “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? “He that hath seen *Me*, hath seen the *Father*.”

Would you, my children, become acquainted with God, your Father, and be at peace? Then study Him, not only in the realm of Nature, where He so gloriously manifests His power and wisdom, but seek to know Him, as mirrored in His only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ—the Brightness of the Father’s Glory—the express Image of His Person.”

Let nothing shake your faith in this foundation, which is elect and precious,—which has stayed the hopes of millions in past ages, and affords the only refuge and footing for the generations to come.

“Let no man deceive you with vain words.” Let no pretensions to profoundness in the smart men of the age for a moment beguile you. I have ever found profound men to be men of faith. They see deep enough to know that behind and below all physical phenomena, there is a great, first and intelligent Cause in whom all things live, move and have their being. “He that formed the eye shall He not see?” Such men, instead of staggering at the mysteries of Revelation, accept them in childlike faith, as the crowning proof of the exceeding love and graciousness of the Father, Who did not create a world in which He could not send His Word to His children—aye more, send Him to take upon Himself their nature, to talk with them, and to tell them of duty and danger; how to live and how to die, and thus how at last to find their way home to the Father’s house, that they may dwell with Him forever.

What a contemptible and dreary conception of the great and good Creator must they have, who cannot reckon it possible that He can guide and bless His children, hear their prayers when they cry unto Him. A wise man would not make a machine which he could not guide and control according to his will. Yet do these modern scien-

tists deny to the Almighty the power and wisdom which dwells in the creatures of His hands. .

We are living, my children, in the midst of a mighty conflict between the spirit of faith and the spirit of unbelief. It is the same old battle that has been waged from the beginning; only now intensified by the wider diffusion of knowledge and the increased activity of thought—the same conflict, on a larger field and by greater numbers.

In such a conflict as this every true man must take sides, for or against—there should be no neutrality with such issues impending. “If the Lord be God, follow Him!” “If Baal,” or Babel, or what not, “follow it.” Be something real and sincere—be a Man.

But, whatever be the issues of the hour to ourselves personally, one thing is most certain.—“The Foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal,” “The Lord knoweth them that are His.” These being rooted and grounded in faith, are not “driven about by every wind of doctrine;” having heard and done the words of Christ, they stand unshaken amid the storms of controversy, because builded upon the Rock of Ages.

The faith of Christ is much more than a system of truths—it is a conscious life. It is not open to speculation but rests secure in deep personal conviction. This may be no sufficient evidence to another, but it is full proof to one's self. He can proclaim with a full heart and unclouded reason—and until he can thus speak, he has not gone down to the foundation laid deep in the soul's consciousness—that which wells up within him as he daily looks up to Christ and finds peace, comfort and strength flowing into his heart, "My Lord and my God!"

Until one reaches this consummation, he may be ever theorizing, ever controverting and "ever learning," not coming to a knowledge of the truth—even the knowledge of God, "whom to know aright is *Life Eternal*."

CHRISTIAN MANLINESS.

AT the commencement of the original volume, I quoted the words of King David to his son Solomon, "Be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man."

I do not know any closing words which would be so apposite as those which tell you what it is to be a man, and what it is to show one's self a man.

The ideal of manliness which each one forms to himself, will depend upon the degree of intellectual and moral elevation to which he may have attained. To the mind of the savage, the successful hunter or the daring warrior presents the highest type of manliness.

He is the savage lord, and rules his tribe by dint of a strong arm, and takes leadership as a lion among lions. Hence the names by which the savage chief is called,—“The Lynx-Eyed,” the “Swift-of-Foot,” the “Wolf-of-the-Prairie,” the “Sitting-Bull,” etc. Such are the names which give expression to the savage idea of man-

liness,—names which link him in with the brute, whom he would fain emulate in swiftness, fierceness and force.

Now, take up your histories of people who have emerged from a state of barbarism, and you meet with names of leaders of men, which give expression to higher ideas of greatness and excellence,—“The Wise,” “The Good,” and “The Just.”

Always you may mark the elevation of a people by the titles of those to whom they pay the highest honor. There is an immense stride from the “Sitting-Bull” to Aristides “The Just.”

If we come into what we call civilized life, and begin our observation low down in the strata of society, in the atmosphere of saloons and gaming tables, you will find the successful pugilist the manliest in the ring; muscle, wind and pluck crown the victor, and encircle him with the girdle of honor. Here, in such an atmosphere, grow up the boys, who, with open-mouthed admiration, are learning their lesson of manliness, —to “swear like men,” “fight like men,” and to “take their liquor like men.”

Now, come from these dregs, which lie at the bottom of all our social life,—where riot and de-

bauchery and brute force reign supreme,—and look into a more advanced, but still unregenerate, condition of society.

What, in popular estimation, is it, to show one's self a man? Is he esteemed manliest, who, like his Maker, is long-suffering, forbearing and forgiving? Or is it he who maintains the so-called point of honor to the last extremity, who will sacrifice every law, human and divine, at the shrine of his heated passions, or the demands of a vicious public opinion, and vindicates his manhood by trampling under foot the law of God? See how this spirit flames out in our children scarcely fledged! See how in their childish brawls they foreshadow their ideas of a coming manliness.

We are not following the leadings of a sickly sentimentalism in setting forth a standard of higher manliness. Where must we look to find the most exalted types of humanity? Who was the noblest of the sons of men? There is but One. He stands alone, unapproachable and incomparable. In His presence the most unblushing infidelity stands admiring, if not adoring—Him, the Incarnate Word, dwelling among men in the same fleshly tabernacle, environed by the same atmosphere, and encompassed by the same temptations.

He who does not feel the supreme necessity of the presence of such an one on earth, not only to reveal God to men, but also to make manifest the ideal man, has learned but little in regard to perfecting his own nature, and comprehends but little of man's greatest needs. I am not now talking to you of theology or creeds. I am speaking of the Man of History, the Man of Every Age.

Take the greatest man of this era,—the Caesar Augustus, who ruled the then known world. The chief distinction of that illustrious emperor—all that now survives of his memory—is the fact of history that, while he reigned, Christ was born. His only fame now is the same with that of the manger and village of Bethlehem,—they indicating the place where, and the time when, Christ was born. They all—prince, village and manger—serve alike but as landmarks in the track of time to point out the beginnings of that Kingdom of which there shall be no end.

Without prestige of birth, and with “no-where to lay His head,” of obscure life and ignominious death, followed by disciples of no repute, He yet gave birth to a new era in time ; and, among civilized peoples, the centuries do now date from His Nativity. We cannot discourse of men, and leave

out of view the "Son of Man." As well speak of mountains, and fail to note that which stands loftiest; as well speak of the solar system, and take no note of the sun.

Men may say what they will of creeds and systems of theology and philosophy. They may deny Deity and deify matter; but they cannot blot out from history, nor dislodge from the hearts of men, the Christ of History,—Him, "the Son of Man." No wonder that at the inauguration of His mission, the Heavens were opened, and a voice from the "Excellent Glory" proclaimed "This is My beloved Son." Had the Heavens been silent the very stones must have cried out.

There was a deep necessity for the advent of such a Man. The Divine image in men had been defaced, almost obliterated. There were still upon earth the strong man to think, strong to work, strong to fight; but where could you look to find the man who realized in his own life the Divine Image,—the God-mirroring man.

I cannot dwell at length upon that wonderful life of Christ's on earth, and, show, as I would love to show, how strong He was to do good, and how strong to resist evil; how sublimely forgetful of self, and how self-sacrificing in His care for oth-

ers. I touch a single feature of that wondrous character—His forbearance under provocation and reproach. I single out this particular feature of the manliness of Christ, because it is just here that His example stands out in the most striking contrast with the maxims of the world and the passions of men. For, advanced as we may be in morals and self government, society is as yet at an immeasurable distance from the precepts and example of the Son of Man. True it is that we do not, except in our Territories and new settlements, decide questions of title to land, etc., by the strong hand; but an unregulated public opinion still condones, if it does not justify, the appeal to arms in the duel or street brawl. Still it is true to a remarkable extent, that men are called upon to “show themselves men,” and vindicate their manliness by the exhibition of brute force. The duel is passing away before the advance of Christian civilization,—chiefly, I fear, because of the political disabilities which a participation in it involves, but there is springing up in its place the street-brawl, in which men find satisfaction for their angry passions. The daily record of these bloody encounters is a blot upon the civilization, not to say the Christianity, of the age. The duel had a touch of

chivalry, and originally of pity in its character; for in olden times, it was an appeal to God "to show the right." The modern street brawl is an unmitigated shame. The rules of ancient chivalry allowed that a combat might honorably terminate by the presence on the field of a lady, or a priest or the King,—the presence of the latter representing the supremacy of the Law. Is the omnipresence of the King of Kings no reality to one who has sworn fealty to that Sovereign?

Whence comes that imperious law which holds our men to such a fearful issue, which compels them, as I have often known, to stifle the best feelings of their hearts, to insult the majesty of human law, and to put their sacrilegious hands upon that prerogative which God Himself proclaims "is Mine?" If I know whence it is, it must be because men imagine that their honor—their manliness—is involved. Is this indeed so? Waive all consideration of the reason, the good citizenship, the piety of it, if possible, does manliness require it?

By what rule shall we try this question? Which way shall we go to find it? Shall we go upward, and regard man after that Divine likeness in which he was made? Or shall we go downward, and

seek in the resemblance which he bears to the lower creation, the source of that unrulèd passion which impels him, upon every provocation, to resort to brute force in deadly combat?

Here we find it,—low down in the unreasoning passion and brute instinct which locks the beasts of the field in deadly conflict; in the venomous reptile, which strikes its fang into whatever crosses its path or purpose; in the savage state, where one's manliness is measured by his unrelenting hate to an enemy, and his manly prowess by the number of scalps that hang on the wall of his wigwam.

The young Arab—so the story goes—begins to attain the stature of a man. At the accepted time his father taunts him with being “a woman.” The young savage understands too well that he is now called upon to “show himself a man.” All the brute within him is stirred. He takes the instrument of death, waits until the shades of night have fallen, and prowls about the tent of some hereditary foe. When his practised ear catches the breathing of assured sleep, he leaps the enclosure, puts his weapon to head or heart; a sure thrust or firm pull makes him “a man!” Next morning his tribe greets him “a man!” Woman will smile upon him now, and listen to his vows (has

she ceased even now to smile upon such men?); and he takes his first degree in savage manliness.

We have gone low down in the scale of creation; let us go upward, and see how this matter looks from another and higher standpoint.

More than eighteen centuries ago, there was a child born in an obscure village of the East. A wonderful lineage was His—"conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of a virgin" mother. As He grew in stature, He "grew in wisdom and in favor with God and man." When He was anointed for His holy mission, God the Father sealed Him, the Divine Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove. He came as the Prince of Peace to a world in revolt. Lest the symbol of the dove should fail to herald His mission, there came a voice from the "Excellent Glory," and made proclamation, "This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

What was the manliness of Him who was thus ushered into the world in the form and with the nature of man? Surely we may learn something from One with whom the Heavenly Father was "well pleased." "When He was reviled, He reviled not again;" "when He suffered, He threatened not." Any man can revile again, when re

viled, but how sublime the forbearance which would rather save than destroy an enemy!

When He was at last hunted down by those who would drown in death the voice they could not answer, there was one act of private vengeance,—a follower of His smote a servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. The crowd around thought, doubtless, that there was one manly man among the disciples; and yet this very man, a few moments later, denied his Master at the taunt of a girl. Christ bore it all; told his follower to put up his sword; stretched forth His hand and healed the wounded servant; lifted up His voice in prayer for His murderers; in His sublime pity sought an argument for them, “Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.”

We gaze upon this sublime compassion as it merges into the Infinite pity, and the conviction becomes overwhelming, that this *SON* of Man was no creation of men’s imagining. The mind cannot conceive of that of which it has no experience, and for which it has no analogy. The old mythologies create for us men and women like ourselves, with all our little prides and passions. We greet the Christ with an adoring wonder. At infinite distance we strive to follow Him. We would fain sit

at His sacred feet, and strive in our poor way to be like Him. He is the true man. "Ecce Homo."

Now go with me from the lowest grade of human nature,—the savage in his war paint, nursing his hate as a virtue; having no word for forgiveness; because not knowing what it is. Trace this nature as it emerges from the barbarous into the Christian life (and there are men who fear God, and love their fellow-men); trace it through all its gradations of excellence until you reach the "Son of Man," the "lost Image" of God the Father, and say, "What is it to show one's self a man?"

But men will plead—what will they plead? The necessity of self defence; the needful limitation of forbearance, where it ceases to be a virtue; the weakness of resolve, and the irresistible force of public opinion. Yes, I am not insensible to the force of such appeals. I know too well what human weakness, under strong temptation, may allow a man to do. But, whatever may be our imperfections, let us not lower the perfection of the Christian standard. Plead, then, whatever you will, of human imperfection, for not being as you ought to be in the way of forbearance, but take care that you plead not *manliness!* For the sake of Him, the manliest,—the man that would not

hurt His fellow-men, but would die, and did die, to do them good,—do not plead *manliness!* If I have wronged another, it is manly in me to confess and repair the wrong. He is not a true man who will not confess his fault. If another has wronged me, oh! it is more than common manliness—it is almost divine—to forgive.

The life of Christ was not a long life,—thirty years of household duty, three of public administration. Learn, then, this great truth, —that the value of life must be reckoned, not only by its length, but by its depth and breadth; as I have before said, “not only by its *extent*, but by its *intent*.”

He accumulated no earthly treasure, but He has left us heirs of all things.

He gained no fame in His day, and yet He founded a kingdom which shall know no end.

His own people rejected Him, and yet generation after generation rise up and call Him blessed.

No tongue, save that of a malefactor, confessed Him when He died; and yet, now, myriads of all tongues, and climes, and ages do bow at the mention of His name.

The moral, then, of the whole, my children,—and with this I close the *volume*,—is this: Give

not much heed to the opinions or judgments of the present hour. A supreme tribunal will review present decisions, and, mayhap, will reverse them.

The moral of the whole is this:—That is the longest life which in its aims and achievements reaches the farthest, and that is the manliest life which is the most self-sacrificing and unselfish. That is the life of Christ, “the Way, the Truth and the Life.”

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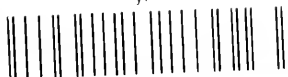
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