



GEORGE Q. CANNON.....EDITOR

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THE FUTURE RELIGION OF AMERICA.

REV. Father Hecker, who is said to be an eminent Catholic divine, has lately been delivering a lecture in Chicago. In this lecture Mr. Hecker discussed "The Religious Condition of this Country." He assumed that there were two tendencies in modern times, viz.: toward Romanism and Rationalism, and he drew the conclusion—which was loudly applauded—that "this great Republic is destined in the Providence of God, to be a great [Roman] Catholic country." He tried to establish this point, by showing that Romanism is becoming dominant in this country; and that Protestantism is with aout mission, is effete, dying, and will soon vanish. To prove this he adverted to the spiritual condition of New England generally, where Protestantism has had full sweep, and he says the essential doctrines of Christ are abandoned. And he arraigns Protestantism for being unfavorable to population, as "in the New England States," he says, "among Protestants, the number of deaths are greater than births, so that soon the foreign population will be dominant."

He next turns to New York. He gives a picture of its deserted or half empty churches, and declares that it is "as wicked as Pekin."

As might be expected, this lecture has aroused the Protestant ministers of Chicago. We have seen the reports of a few of their discourses in reply. One of them, the Rev. Robert L. Collier, says:

"The prophecy that America is soon and suddenly, or ever at all, to become Roman Catholic, has no support in statistics and no encouragement in the spirit of our civilization."

Such a statement, he says, sounds like irony. He thinks the Romish Church in America, a foreigner, and unnaturalized. It can never, he says, learn our manners, and we can never learn its ways. Between the spirit of that Church and American civilization, he thinks, there is a great gulf fixed, and it is impassable. He asserts that Romanism is not gaining, but daily and hourly losing strength the world over. He admits that neither Romanism nor Sectarianism can possibly be the ultimate form of Christianity. It must be a religion founded in reason and supported by conscience. This, he says, is not the Christianity of Romanism, neither is it that of sectarian Protestantism. Protestantism, he asserts, denies the right to reason and to reasonable inquiry, though it does not deny the right practically, theoretically it does.

Mr. Collier disputes the statement that Romanism is making rapid numerical increase in America. It is not keeping pace, he says with the growth of population in our States. The 4,000,000 Catholics in the United States are scarcely more than the emigrants to this country, he says, from Catholic Europe since the beginning of this century; and he endeavors to prove, by statistics, while the population has increased six-fold, the church communicants of the Evangelical sects have increased more than ten-fold. He winds up by saying:

"Finally, there can scarcely be said to be even a problematic element in this inquiry as to the future religion in America. It is the very genius of our civilization—it is the very spirit of the age in which we live, to say 'What is not of reason is not of God.' The world is going wherever reason leads it. For God can only lead men by this power in them which is the highest expression of himself, and the surest evidence of his sovereignty. Outward authorities of church and creed, venerable traditions whose only commendation is their agedness, must give way before the inquiring intellect and devout heart, as darkness gives way at the coming of the sun."

Rev. T. M. Eddy, D.D., also denies in strong language the assumptions and predictions of Father Hecker respecting Roman Catholicism being the future religion of America. Yet, in alluding

to Hecker's statement that the number of deaths exceeded the births among Protestants in New England, he commends the thoughtful attention of American Protestants to this ground of hope for Papal dominance. He does not dispute Father Hecker's statement, but he says:

"The Church must never cease to hold 'marriage honorable in all,' and children a heritage from the Lord, or say other than 'Children are as arrows in the hand of a mighty man:'

Happy is he that hath his quiver full of them."

An excellent and very true sentiment, and, consequently, good Latter-day Saints, doctrine. While these sectaries, with jarring creeds and conflicting opinions, are trying to settle this question as to which shall be the Future Religion of America, we trust Utah shall ever diverge from the practice New England has been accused of, and diligently and strictly carry out the sentiment of Mr. Eddy, which he quotes from the Bible, in making marriage honorable in all, and proving that "children are a heritage from the Lord;" that they "are as arrows in the hand of a mighty man," and that "happy is he that hath his quiver full of them;" and in this manner settle, in our way, which shall be the future religion of America.

DISCOURSE

By PRESIDENT B. YOUNG, delivered at the funeral obsequies of Miss Augusta St. Clair, in the 13th Ward Assembly Rooms, Jan. 24th, 1869.

REPORTED BY DAVID W. EVANS.

I shall on the present occasion, make a few remarks to the living, which if lived up to will prepare them for their last change in this tabernacle, preparatory to emerging into a higher state of glory and intelligence. I shall base my remarks on a few passages of scripture.

Paul, in writing to his brethren, taught many things in regard to the life of man here, and the hopes of man hereafter, through obedience to the principles of truth. In the 15th chapter and 29th verse of the first epistle to the Corinthians, he says: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?"—A portion of scripture is very little thought of in the Christian world. I do not know that I ever heard it quoted in my life until I heard it quoted by the Prophet Joseph Smith. The 3rd verse of the 4th chapter of the second epistle to the Corinthians reads, "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost."

On these two passages of scripture I shall make a few remarks. Those who are acquainted with the Bible know very well that Paul labored hard to convince a few sects of the Jews that Jesus had risen from the dead and that the just would rise from the dead, and that a resurrection awaited all mankind. In his arguments he has set forth proofs which, to those who understand the spirit by which he wrote, are undeniable; but, to those who do not believe, they are dark and vain. These arguments, in connection with other proofs concerning the resurrection of the Savior and of the just who rose at the same time, contained sufficient to prove to the honest in heart in Paul's days, the truth of the doctrine of the resurrection. The tribe of Judah, to the present day, are unbelievers in the resurrection of the Savior, and in the divinity of His mission; but this does not affect those who do believe. I have merely to remark, in connection with this, that there is not a person on the face of the earth, but what, if he or she would adopt the principles taught by the Savior, would become a very excellent man or woman. If the tribe of Judah are good, righteous and godly, by obeying the sayings of the Savior they would become better. For the gospel that we preach is calculated to make good men of bad men, and better men of good men; "but if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." We can say that we have joy in believing the great principles of the resurrection connected with our faith; we have joy in contemplating the plan of salvation, for the simple reason that there is not a character on the face of the whole earth, but what his case can be reached by the gospel of the Son of God, which is calculated to bring up all the sons of Adam and Eve and to place them in a kingdom of glory, and in possession of everlasting joy and peace, and of every qualification that the intelligent mind can desire. The most of the in-

habitants of the earth who have come forth have lived and died without the knowledge of the Gospel which we preach. I shall not take the trouble to enter into any argument to prove that it is true, for the simple reason that the Gospel of Jesus Christ can be known and understood, and its benefits realized, only by those who repent of their sins and turn to God with their whole heart, and who have received the Holy Spirit promised by Jesus to His disciples, which is the Comforter, the Holy Ghost; and with the exception of such persons we expect the whole human race to be unbelievers. But our gospel is true, and it is calculated to reach the case of every individual who ever did or ever will live upon the face of the earth. It is not confined to the few,—to those that believe in the Bible. Very few of the inhabitants of the earth have believed in that book; but very few believed in the mission of Moses,—only just a few tribes. In the days of Israel the nations which surrounded them contended against them and sought to destroy them, and we have it recorded in history that they were held in Egyptian bondage for four hundred years, during which they were subjected to cruel persecution. Are they the only ones who will enjoy the benefits of the gospel of the Son of God? No; it reaches back to the children of Noah, and, from him, back to the children of Adam who lived before the flood, and this gospel will be preached to every creature possessing intelligence, that is capable of receiving its benefits who ever did live. In this respect their volition is free and they will be left to choose or refuse for themselves as you and I were when the gospel was preached to us.

The doctrine inculcated by Paul in the passage of scripture to which I have referred,—about baptism for the dead, is very rarely hinted at in the New Testament, while the Old Testament, or the Jewish Bible is silent on the subject. We do not find that such a doctrine was ever preached to Adam, or by him to his children. We have no account that it was ever preached by Noah, Abraham, Moses or the patriarchs, or by any person that lived down to the days of the Apostles. If it was ever taught by them, we have no record of it. This doctrine is, however, true and has been revealed in these latter days, as it was promised that many things would be thus revealed. If it was ever taught by the Apostles, it was looked upon, by the Council of Nice, as erroneous or as not profitable to teach to the people, and was consequently rejected by that Council from the canon of scripture. But whether this doctrine was taught anciently or not, matters very little to us; it is taught to us in this our day, and we are believers in it. There are intimations of it in the scriptures. For instance when the body of Jesus lay in the tomb, it is written of Him that he went to preach to the spirits in prison, which were sometimes disobedient in the days of Noah; but through the longsuffering and patience of Him who sent the gospel, it was preached to them while in prison that they might be judged according to men in the flesh. This is an intimation of this doctrine, but nothing more.

This doctrine was revealed in these latter days to Joseph Smith, the prophet, and through him to the people called Latter-day Saints; it is now published to the world; and it is a doctrine that will save the children of men to the latest generation.

"If our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost,"—to them that refuse to receive the light. All such will be counted unbelievers; they can never reap the benefits of the redemption wrought out by the Son of God without first believing and repenting of their sins and bowing in obedience to the requirements of heaven, when they will receive the influences of the Spirit of the Lord, which are given to the children of men that they may be able to judge between good and evil. Job says "there is a spirit in man and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth it understanding." This, to any person who believes the Bible, is an intimation that there are invisible influences which operate upon the children of men, causing an instinctive feeling, desire, fear or anxiety that we, perhaps, cannot account for. Now, the Lord has given to each and every one of the children of men the light of His Spirit, so that they can choose the good and refuse the evil; consequently those who wish to receive the gospel can do so upon the principle of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance towards God, and then going forth into the waters of baptism and being baptized for the remission of sins.

The question may arise in the minds

of some, is there any other method by which the children of men can be saved in the celestial kingdom of God? Is there any other door into this kingdom? No, there is not. Can a man be saved unless he is born of the water and of the spirit? No, he can not. He cannot be brought back into the presence of the Father and of the Son unless he bows in obedience to the requirements of Heaven by being born of the water and of the Spirit. This was the declaration of Jesus to Nicodemus, which shows conclusively that this is the only way to be saved. There is no intimation, word, or sentence in the Old or New Testament that a man can receive salvation without obeying the gospel.

In our day there are a great many religions among the nations of the earth. Religion is got up to suit the conditions of the people; and they vary according to the disposition of the people, and according to altitude and latitude. But this is all imaginary; it is vain philosophy. The religion of Heaven,—the doctrine of life and salvation is but one thing. There is but one doctrine, but one door into the kingdom of Heaven. I am ready to acknowledge that the people of the world have a great many truths. I would not be so exclusive in my faith and feelings as to say there are no good people, and when we examine the Christian world and learn their doctrines and creeds we find they have a great many truths; but no one has all truth. One sect has one truth, and another has another, and amongst them they have a great many truths. In my day, and in the remembrance of some of my brethren, sisters and friends the doctrine of baptism for the remission of sins has been resurrected by the sectarian world through Alexander Campbell. Before his time there were scarcely a sect,—and certainly not in America or England,—who believed in the doctrine. There might have been individuals, and no doubt there were, on the face of the earth who believed in the doctrine, but there was no such doctrine practiced. Is this the fact? Yes, it is, according to our best knowledge, and yet it was established beyond all controversy in the New Testament, and no man who believed in that book could dispute it.

Why did not Mr. Campbell resurrect the doctrine of the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost? If he did he had no authority to do either, he did not receive the Holy Ghost, and he was not acquainted with its office, power or influence, although he, like every other person, was more or less influenced by the spirit of God. But the doctrine of laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost was not resurrected at the time that the doctrine of baptism for the remission of sins was, no, this was the end. "You must not lay on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost," was the cry of Mr. Campbell; and when we ask him and his followers if they believe in the doctrine of laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost and in the gifts and blessings and manifestations of the power of God as enjoyed by His people anciently? And ask them where are your apostles and prophets and prophecies, your gifts of healings, of tongues, of discernment of spirits, and do your elders visit the sick and anoint them with oil and lay hands on them for their recovery? "Oh no, we do not believe in these things." And we may hunt through all the religions on the face of the earth and there is not one of them which incorporates in its faith all truth except the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Does the religion of the Latter-day Saints embrace all truth? Yes, it does. Do the Latter-day Saints know how to sever truth from error? Many individuals do not, but the gospel of the Son of God, which is taught them, embraces every truth that ever did or ever will exist. In their religion is incorporated all true philosophy, every true science and every truth in heaven, on the earth, under the earth or in any kingdom, no matter where. This is the gospel, and this gospel reaches the condition of all the children of men.

With regard to the doctrine of the resurrection, you will remember that Paul labored hard to convince a few sects of the Jews, of its truth; but in this day we are not under the necessity of laboring for this. The Christian world believe in the resurrection, consequently this point is yielded.

But if we talk to the Christian world about its blessings that will be revealed in the latter days in the Millennium, in building up the kingdom of God, when the Saints will live a thousand years without molestation and interruption, and without sin to afflict them as it has hitherto; when God will multiply righteousness upon the earth, and sweep