

LARGE SERIES.



National Reform Documents.

VOL. III.

NO. 3.

APRIL, 1900.

Issued Quarterly.

Price, 25c. a Year.

— REPORT —

OF THE

NEW YORK CONVENTION,

DECEMBER 5-7, 1899.

Office of

National Reform Association,

No. 216 Park Way, Allegheny, Pa.,

1900.

world and entwined itself with the historic roots of all that shall blossom in the coming centuries. Dissolve the connection of our schools with vital religion in the Bible, the text-book, the school-room spirit, and the convictions and example of the teachers and you will so devitalize and dessicate it that those who know the larger life with God and for man will turn away from it en masse. This is no idle threat. Religion will again make its own schools as it has already done.

And all know that it is easier to preserve than to change in any great national institution. Our schools are not now secular, if secularity means freedom from all moral or Christian influence." They are non-sectarian but that is the poles apart from secular. "Our schools as they exist" (says Dr. Wylie in the most able and exhaustive analysis of the situation ever published) "are a protest against the folly of the effort to divide human life into two parts called sacred and secular and to exclude religion from the latter"—The law which governs the District of Columbia is as nearly perfectly balanced legislation on the whole matter as can be found. It provides that the teachers shall "inculcate in their pupils truthfulness, self-control, temperance, frugality, industry, obedience to parents, reverence for the aged, respect for the rights of others, politeness to all, kindness to animals, desire for knowledge and obedience to the laws of God; but no teacher shall exercise any sectarian inference in the school." "The opening exercises in every school shall consist of reading by the teacher, without note or comment, a portion of the Bible, repeating the Lord's Prayer at the option of the teacher, and appropriate singing by the pupils."

[The final proposition would have been that this American doctrine of Religion in the State, with the education it authorized and created, is abreast of the highest ideals of education we now possess, and is alone adequate to the demands of our country and the exigencies of our times.—Omitted for want of time.]

THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST.

BY DR. T. P. STEVENSON.

The theme assigned to me is "The Kingship of Jesus Christ." Stated thus broadly it brings before us the whole kingly office of our Redeemer. But as limited by the design and scope of this Conference, it is the Kingship of Christ over the nation which we are to consider.

No subject could be of greater theoretical interest, or of greater practical importance. Is there a sovereign power, to which this nation, and all nations, are responsible? If so, is it God, in his essential character, or is it Christ Jesus, the Mediator between God and man, to whom the nation owes its allegiance? If Christ is the Ruler of nations, how does He exercise His authority? Where are His laws recorded? What does He require of nations, and how does He enforce His requirements? These questions are of interest to every Christian patriot, to every lawmaker and every magistrate, to every minister of Christ who is concerned to be a faithful ambassador and to deliver his message faithfully.

We hold this truth—the Kingship of Christ over the nations—in no mystical or extravagant sense. We are not dreaming of a visible kingdom to be set up on the earth in some future dispensation, with the Lord occupying a palace and a throne, and administering His government after the manner of earthly potentates. We simply mean that the revealed will of Jesus Christ is law for nations and governments as well as for individual men. We mean that since Christ has spoken plainly on the subject, for example, of marriage and divorce, no nation to whom these words of Christ have come is at liberty to make laws for the family which contravene His laws. All Christian men call Jesus, Master and Lord, and find in His will, the supreme motive of their lives. We simply mean that nations and governments ought also to have regard for His will; that governmental acts and national policies are to be judged by the spirit and teachings of Christ; that Queen Victoria and Emperor William, the British Parliament and the American Congress, ought to look up to Him who was crucified and say: "Lord, what wouldst Thou have us to do?" We mean that the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount are binding on nations and governments as well as on individual men; and binding because they are the law of One who is the nation's king.

NECESSARY TO HIS WORK AS SAVIOUR.

That Jesus Christ is, in this sense, the actual Governor among the nations, may be inferred from the simple fact that he is the Saviour of Men. There is nothing which the world so sorely needs, or so ardently craves, as leadership. Competent leadership unites men, welds

a multitude of units into a single public person, guided and governed by a single will; wakens their enthusiasm, calls out their energies. A thousand men without a leader are a mob, or a flock of sheep. A thousand men with a leader whom they love and trust are a mighty, often, an invincible, force. The world is everywhere and always in quest of competent leaders. France flung herself at the feet of Napoleon, cold, heartless, selfish as he was, because he was a born chieftain. God has made human progress possible through the centuries, by raising up good men as leaders from age to age, each one in some subordinate and local sphere, guiding his own people forward to better things. Moses, David, Alfred the Great, Martin Luther, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln have been chief factors in the world's progress. But they were each limited to a narrow sphere; they led a small portion of the race through a short period of time. He who is to save the world, to secure for all mankind the highest and best things possible, must be the leader of all men through all time. He must unite men sundered and divided by sin; must appeal to their loyalty by a legitimate authority, to their love by his virtue and goodness, to their confidence by His wisdom; must arouse and inspire them; must direct their multitudinous energies to single aims; must keep all peoples marching like the cohorts of an army toward one goal; must maintain this guidance through successive generations. No one doing less than this for men would be worthy to be called the Saviour of Men. And He who does this for men, governs men, is a "leader and commander of the people." Christ's kingly office is, antecedently, as necessary as His priesthood. If man had continued innocent and the race had unfolded upon the earth, these indispensable conditions of unity and co-operation, in order to the highest achievements, would have been fulfilled in the patriarchal government of Adam, the natural head of the race. When he failed, the second man, the Lord from heaven, must not only redeem men from the guilt of sin, but must reign over them in righteousness. And He who rules the world must rule the nations of the world—for these are the "powers" of the earth, earth's mightiest factors for evil or for good. Unless they are made subject to Him, the authority of God is not re-established over one of the largest spheres of human life. If no other title than Jesus, Saviour of Men, were given Him in the Scriptures, if no promise and no prophecy foretold the submission of the nations to Him, we would still know, on antecedent grounds, that the world's Saviour is the Ruler of the Nations.

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

But the direct testimony of holy Scripture on this point is abundant and clear. I pass by the many passages which declare that Christ is a King, that "dominion" was to be given to Him and that "government was to be upon His shoulder," and come to those which declare that the authority of Christ is universal. All the resources of language are employed to set forth the absolutely unlimited character of His dominion. Paul declares (Eph. 1: 20, 22): "God raised Him from

the dead and set Him at his own right hand, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under His feet." The same apostle argues elsewhere that "since all things are put under Him, He only is excepted who did put all things under Him." If His authority is universal, it concludes, all moral beings, and nations and governments, as moral agents, must be subject to Him. He is the Lawgiver, the author of the moral law, the "Angel in the Mount" from whom Moses received the living oracles, and if the moral law binds nations they must be under Christ who is the author of that law.

Another class of passages expressly declares that nations are under the authority of Christ. Daniel saw in vision, "One like the Son of Man, coming to the ancient of days, and there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve Him." He bears the title "Prince of the kings of the earth," and wears on his vesture the name "King of kings." Nations and their rulers are commanded to yield submission to Him. In the second Psalm we have three visions: First. A vision of the world in rebellion against Jehovah and against His Anointed, His Christ, the kings of earth and the rulers taking counsel: "Let us break their bonds asunder and cast their cords from us." Second. A vision of God, regarding this impotent rebellion with scorn and with anger, and saying, "Yet, have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Third. A vision of the Son of God, the anointed Sovereign, coming forward in person and claiming his dominion: "I will declare the decree, Jehovah said to me, Thou art my Son; ask, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Then follows the conclusion: "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the earth; kiss the Son lest He be angry and ye perish when his wrath is kindled but a little."

Among the glorious accomplishments of the future it is expressly foretold that nations and governments shall submit to the authority of Christ. In the seventy-second Psalm we sing: "All kings shall fall down before Him, all nations shall serve Him." John, in the Apocalypse, heard the seventh trumpet sound, and great voices in heaven saying: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ." And in the final vision of the city of God, he saw the nations of the saved "walking in the light of it, and the kings of the earth, bringing their glory and their honor into it." On the strength of these impregnable words of Holy Scripture, Dr. A. A. Hodge, of Princeton, based his sublime appeal: "I charge you citizens of the United States, afloat on your wild sea of politics, there is another king, one Jesus; the safety of the state can be secured only in the way of whole-souled loyalty to His Person and obedience to his law.*

*Hodge's Popular Lectures on Theological Themes, p. 287.

OBJECTIONS MET.

But it is objected to all this that Christ said: "My kingdom is not of this world." True; but he did not say: This world is not of my kingdom. The Greek particle "ek" which our translators have rendered "of" means of, in the sense of origin. Christ's kingdom is not from this world, or out of this world. It does not originate here. It does not spring up among the world kingdoms, of the same class with them, and as a rival to them. That this is the Lord's meaning is plain from his further words: "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." Christ's kingdom is not of this world, but of heaven; but it covers the earth, it overarches and includes all earthly kingdoms, according to His own declaration: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

But it is objected again: How can there be a kingdom supreme over earthly kingdoms, without something visible, or tangible, as the evidence of its existence and its authority? How can the governments of earth, with their territory and their population, their fleets and their armies, their parliaments and their congresses, their treasuries and their storehouses, be related to an invisible King, and to purely spiritual authority?

For answer, let us remember that purely spiritual facts and forces have played a large part in human affairs, have marshalled armies and won battles and changed the course of history. What was the concern of Catholic Europe for the holy sepulcher, but a purely spiritual sentiment for an object distant and unseen; but that sentiment gathered together the millions of Christendom, flung them in successive crusades against the power of the Turk, and made possible modern history and modern civilization. What was the anti-slavery feeling of fifty years ago, but a sentiment, a spiritual conviction against which law and usage and vested interests, and prospective gains, all things tangible and visible, stood arrayed; yet that sentiment shook the continent with the tread of armies, repealed the legislation of a century, struck the fetters from the limbs of four millions of slaves, and embalmed these changes in the text of an amended Constitution. And what achievements shall we not deem possible to the sentiment of loyalty to "the King eternal, immortal, invisible," infused into seventy millions of human hearts and working out as an active and controlling principle in their lives? It has been finely said that the translation of the Bible in the English tongue and its diffusion among the people, lifted the roof of every peasant's cottage to touch the stars. The truth of the kingship of Christ simply lifts the roof of every political convention, of every legislative chamber, of every polling booth, to take in the throne of the King of kings.

HOW CHRIST ESTABLISHES HIS KINGDOM.

This objection drawn from the supposed mystical, spiritual, and earthly character of Christ's kingdom disappears finally when we no

the means and the process by which this kingdom establishes itself in any land and over any people. Christ subdues a nation to Himself only by winning a majority of its citizens to be His friends and followers, and infusing the nation with His principles and His spirit. In this way He abolished slavery—by giving to the nation a controlling majority of anti-slavery men and women. In this way He has abolished the lottery and is curbing the liquor-traffic. In this way He exchanged our traditional Indian policy of broken treaties and exterminating wars, for a policy of good faith and civilization, of education and religion. In this way, by renewing and transforming English sentiment and opinion, he has exchanged the cruel and rapacious sway of the East India Company for the just and beneficent rule which England maintains over India to-day. In this way He gave us the anti-polygamy law of 1882, is closing the doors of Congress to-day against a polygamous representative-elect, and has led 23 states within four years to amend their laws relating to marriage and divorce. This gradual creation of a dominant Christian sentiment among any people is the gradual establishment of the kingdom of Christ. It is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel: "The kingdom and dominion under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, and they shall take the kingdom and possess it forever and ever." This is what is meant, and this is all that is meant, by the striking words of the Hebrew Psalmist: "Let a two-edged sword be in the hand of the saints, to execute vengeance upon the nations and punishments upon the people, to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron;" and in the words of Christ: "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;" or in the apocalyptic vision of John: "I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given unto them, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

In all this, there is nothing to excite alarm—except among godless politicians whose occupation will be gone, and criminals who hate good government and righteous laws. The purpose of the followers of Christ is simply this, that when they have become numerous enough, and have attained a sufficiently clear and unanimous understanding of Christ's will in the matter, then they will govern this country with their convictions. Of course, they will, just as the servants of Satan govern it so largely to-day. So long as the majority of the citizens of New York prefer the rule of Tammany, Tammany will rule. And when the majority of the citizens of this city, or any city, of this nation, or any nation, become thoroughly loyal to Christ as King, then, in that city, or that nation, Christ will taken to Him His great power and will reign." The beating hearts of men, with their measured strokes of conviction and feeling and purpose, are the bells which the poet heard:

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
 Ring out the false, ring in the true;
 Ring in the nobler modes of life
 With sweeter manners, purer laws,
 Ring out the darkness of the land,
 Ring in the Christ that is to be.

The practical value of this truth lies in the nobleness and efficacy of the motives which it supplies for public virtue and political reformation. There is no principle in human nature so powerful as the religious principle. No great or enduring results have been achieved by any movement which did not appeal to the consciences of men. A recent authority—*Studies in Historical and Political Science*, Johns Hopkins University—says: "We must count on the indifferent watchfulness of the ordinary citizen in ordinary times. We should, therefore, endeavor to enlist the love of gain, of power, of fame, on the side of the public weal." How ineffably mean and paltry are such motives in comparison with loyalty to the person and to the rights of Jesus, the King! This truth makes patriotism a part of religion; identifies political reforms with the interests and glory of the Son of God, and supplies the true statesman with the motive whereby he may urge the nation on to the highest possible achievements. That this truth may have its full effect upon the nation's character, and its full fruition in the national life, it ought to be acknowledged on the fundamental law. To have witnessed for this truth through all the years of its history, to have used this truth as the chief instrument in all its work of agitation, is the distinctive glory and strength of the National Reform movement. "In hoc signo vincemus;" by this sign we shall conquer. Many a claimant to an earthly throne has been defeated. An earthly aspirant may abjure his claims, abandon the contest, and leave those who have espoused his cause to the mercy of his rival. But Christ cannot. He is too solemnly pledged to this great undertaking. The interests which hang on the result are too vast and too enduring. "He must reign till He has put all His enemies under His feet." "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged till He have set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law." Let us dedicate ourselves anew to this holy cause with a courage and devotion like those of the "knights of the round table," in whose eyes the poet saw

"Clear honor shining like the dewy star
 Of dawn, and faith in their great King, and pure
 Affection, and the light of victory
 And glory gained and ever more to gain."

THE QUICKENING OF THE PUBLIC CONSCIENCE.

BY REV. W. I. WISHART.

In a prelude to one of his Monday lectures Joseph Cook declared that "safe popular freedom consists of four things, and cannot be compounded out of any three of the four—the diffusion of liberty, the diffusion of intelligence, the diffusion of property, and the diffusion of conscientiousness." If popular freedom shows some signs of instability to-day, it may be safely asserted that the chief cause is a lack of conscientiousness on the part of the people. There have been some dangerous limitations put upon that constitutional liberty of which we are wont to boast ourselves. There is not the general diffusion of intelligence which ought to obtain in this country of free schools and multiplied universities. The concentration of vast amounts of property in the hands of a few is a threatening condition that should awaken deep concern among all patriots and should drive all statesmen and reformers to seek some right basis of equalization and more general diffusion of property. But the danger to our free institutions from all these directions is practically inconsiderable as compared with the danger arising from the apparently increasing moral indifference and godlessness of the nation.

Lord Macaulay asserted that when New England was as densely populated as old England, then would come the real test of our institutions—a test to the result of which the great historian looked forward with rather gloomy forebodings. But I believe that our institutions, other things being equal, will stand the test of a great increase of population without suffering any damage. But they will unquestionably be strained to the breaking point if ever it comes to pass that our vast populace shall have no ear to hear the voice of God or a heart unwilling to obey Him.

That evils should exist in the body politic and should inject their poison into political administration is not greatly to be wondered at, but the awful danger that confronts us to-day is that the people shall become indifferent to these evils, and we shall be compelled by and by to complain as did the old Hebrew prophet, "My people love to have it so." If there is one thing more than another that might seem to lend color to the secularist's claim that the nation is not a moral person, that