

REV. MR. MANNING TAKES MR. G. POWLES TO TASK

A Letter from the Pastor of Cambridge-st. Methodist Church is Reply to Our Chicago Correspondent.

Editor of the Watchman-Warder. Dear Sir—Mr. Powles of Chicago wrote a letter to your paper two weeks ago which I feel should not go unnoticed.

He says that the disciples never understood Jesus and his message. His statement means that the Epistles are a misinterpretation of Christ and that they are unworthy of any man's belief.

Yet the Christian church has always regarded the Epistles as agreeing with the gospels. It will hardly be said that the gospels do not contain a reliable record concerning Christ's sayings and doings.

Let any one judge then whether it is likely that innumerable scholarly and godly men should throughout all the years of the Christian church be so dense as to believe the Gospels and the Epistles agree while the reality the one is contrary to the other. It is often said by divines that possibly the church does not yet comprehend Christ's teaching perfectly, but to assert that the church has essentially misrepresented and misunderstood Christ is to assert what is incredible.

Does Mr. Powles mean that he has the proper understanding of Christ, but that all the learning and piety of the church are yet in ignorance?

He contradicts the statement often made that the Bible is easily understood. It is true that some things in the Bible are difficult to understand. This is to be expected seeing that the Bible treats of great themes. But it is a very small part of the Bible that is mysterious.

Mr. Powles refers to its "physics" and "metaphysics." But physics and metaphysics from only minute portions of the whole book. I have been reading the Bible daily since I was a boy, that is over thirty years ago. I have read many other books, some of them hard reading. I have some right to express an opinion on the Bible. I never found the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Job, Psalms, Proverbs difficult to understand.

The meaning of the prophecies is not easily seen, but while some parts of them are difficult, the most of their contents are simple, while of the New Testament the only obscure book is the Apocalypse. It is not true to say that "From end to end the ideas of the Bible are couched in metaphorical, poetical forms."

The very opposite of this is the case. Some of the Bible is metaphorical and practical. Most of this metaphor and poetry is beautiful and simple reading. Some of it is difficult to interpret.

The fact of the case is that the great mass of the contents of the Bible is interesting and instructive reading to any ordinary person; that the more difficult portions of the Bible unfold their meaning to the candid student and that the portions that cannot be understood from only a fragment of the whole book.

Mr. Powles says that no human being can believe in the divine conception of Christ, in his vicarious death, in his resurrection and his deity. It is a cool thing to tell the entire Christian church of all ages that it did not and does not believe the doctrines of its religion.

All these doctrines are believed to be found in the Bible. The church did not form them into creeds at once. It required some time to state truth in dogmatic form. But the church has held firmly by these doctrines from the beginning. It holds firmly by them to-day. There are exceptions, but the rule is as I have said.

One would think by the tone of Mr. Powles' letter, that he had with facility thrown over the doctrines of Christianity. But every man is of his constitution of mind. The Christian doctrines are clear to the church. I do not know that since the world began any statements have been subjected to study so deeply, so prolonged, so minute, so analytical, as the statements of our Christian faith. It is not without cause one believes them to be true. And while some may doubt and some disbelieve them, they still remain as the undoubted faith of the Christian church as a whole. Yours etc.

T. MANNING.

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Now is the time to have your bicycles overhauled, adjusted and put in first-class shape, to be ready for the opening of the wheeling season. W. WEBSTER, Practical Mechanic, William-st., Lindsay.—14-1f.

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MR. POWLES ANSWERS REV. MR. HUGHSON

He Makes Astonishing Statements About the Religious Views of Chicago Teachers.

Chicago, Ill., April 27 1901. Editor of the Watchman-Warder.

Sir—Let me hasten to assure the Rev. J. S. Hughson, Mr. Editor, that I am not principal of the public schools of Chicago and that I have not in any way pretended to be. You will probably be able to explain to him how you misunderstood my dignity in your generous way; I am not. I am just a teacher, a public servant that Henry Ward Beecher was fond of saying stands above all others, not excepting the one of which he was an able representative, the preacher.

It may be of interest, however to know that the newly appointed superintendent of Chicago Schools is, so far as I can learn, like the good and great Abraham Lincoln, not a member of any church, and that of the thirty-two teachers in the West Division High School, in which I have been a teacher eleven years, twenty six hold such ideas that would keep them out of, and does keep them out of, any Christian church of the kind known as orthodox, yet I think they are all good Christians! The bible is excluded by law, and justly so, from the schools of Chicago, Cincinnati, and many other cities here, in the interest of peace.

Mr. Hughson points to me as "a striking illustration of the dangers of fundamental religious doctrines," by which he means his own doctrines, if the Bible were taught in the public schools. And I heartily agree with him. It is a remarkable fact that whenever the Bible is taught by men who are given freedom to utter what they think, and by men who are more familiar with man's past than they pretend to be with his future, and with how the human mind works, there quickly follows a modification of views concerning it. And if a man who is not free speaks out what his best judgment tells him what happens to him? If a Catholic he is excommunicated, as was Tolstoi the other day, and Prof. Mivart in England a year ago. If a Protestant he is tried for heresy, etc., dropped from membership, ostracised, and, if a minister, not allowed to preach any more. Mr. Hughson knows, as do all the ministers of his church, that many of the ideas of the Bible, ideas pertaining to the social, mental, and political condition of man have been fruitful of unnumbered sorrows and woes, and that the world has left them behind in spite of theologians, priests, and the church. The church has ever followed, not led in the rights of man; it put Jesus to death to begin with, and since then wherever it is strongest, the principles of Jesus are generally weakest.

Let me mention an incident that has much significance. A Congregational minister here a year ago had a series of five Easter sermons preached in his church just before Easter by the most eminent preachers in this city, all on the resurrection. At the close of one of these I asked the preacher of the evening plainly, "Where is Christ's body now?" "It is on the right hand of the throne of God," was his prompt reply. "And where is that?" I asked. "In Heaven," he answered. "And where is that?" I asked him. He smiled at me, and I continued: "Did the body of this man weighing, say, 140 pounds, rise from earth against gravitation, which operated then the same as now?" "But it was a changed body," he answered, "a spiritual body!" "Well, then," I asked, what became of his material body, this body of flesh and bone the same as yours and mine?" "Oh," said he in an indifferent manner, "that went into the ground somewhere, of course; nobody knows where." Then I asked him if it is not true that ninety-nine out of every hundred Christians believe that it was the material body of Jesus that rose from the earth! He replied, "I don't know but they do!" "And they are wrong?" said I. "They are wrong" was his answer. "Who was this man? The Rev. Dr. Little, President of the Theological Seminary of Evanston, a suburb of Chicago. This is a Methodist College affiliated with Northwestern University. The sermon this man had just preached contained no suggestion that it was a spiritual resurrection and not a physical one he had in mind."

Now how long is this suppression of the truth to go on? I want the truth, and the people want it too. We know it will make us free; Jesus said so. Is the church standing in the way of the truth? It looks like it. Very truly, GEO. A. POWLES.

(We are unable to say how we got the impression that Mr. Powles was principal of Chicago public schools. Ed. Watchman-Warder.)

Lawn Mowers, cheap, at Cinnamon's.

Stock Notes

Mr. Robert Eagleson of Glandine, is again to the front with fine lots of cattle. He delivered on Monday to Mr. McIlhargey 7 head of choice export cattle for which he received the handsome sum of \$510. The average weight was 1470 pounds. The price was 5 cents per pound. Mr. Eagleson is fast becoming one of the foremost breeders and feeders of Ontario; he has the finest herd of grade cattle in the country. The evidence of that is, that he has won the herd prize three years in succession. Mr. E. has not only made beef growing a success but grain and clover seed as well. He has sold this past season \$1100-worth of grain and over \$600-worth of fat hogs and has another \$1000-worth now feeding. Mr. E. thinks it pays to form up to date.

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Academy of Music

On Wednesday night Mr. Edouard D'Oize and his company put on a very good rendering of "Hamlet." Nothing Shakespearean has been better done here. Mr. D'Oize though a young man has dramatic ability of an high order. He made a good impression in Richelieu here last fall and sustained it in Hamlet. His interpretation of the Prince of Denmark makes his madness very doubtful. He is mad on occasion but Mr. D'Oize evidently agrees with those students of Shakespeare who believe Hamlet's mental aberration was chiefly assumed for a purpose. The chamber scene between Hamlet and his mother was a telling passage. The first and second entry of the ghost were marred by the footlights which should have been turned off as they were in the third appearance. The audience was not large and some in it who were so moved to levity by the most serious passages, should stay away from Shakespearean shows till they have read up. On Thursday night the comedy David Garrick was put on.

On Friday night the Peterboro band under the direction of Bandmaster Gliddon was greeted by a good house. Nobody was disappointed. The work of the band was firstclass. There are about 40 members and all appear to be painstaking, careful musicians. Unless in point of discipline they compare very well with Godfrey's men. The program contained a good variety of music and very well illustrated range of this band's skill. The hunting chorus was a particularly fine effort. Mr. Harry Clarke's trombone solo The Holy City made him a favorite. He is a good player of unassuming manner and delighted the audience both with his rendering of that great composition, and The Palms as an encore. Peterboro has reason to be proud of its band which is equalled by few bands in Canada.

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