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THE NEW CHRISTIANITY

OR

THE RELIGION OF THE NEW AGE

by

REV. S. G. BLAND

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Letters to the Editor

The Prospective Cleavage in Protestantism.

Kingston, June 14.—(To the Editor): Writing in the Christian Guardian Byron Stauffer in a misleading article entitled "The World Growing Better or Worse" said "Is Optimism versus Pessimism to be the issue which will divide the forces of the new world—Protestantism into two camps? Is it essential to believe that Christ will come to find in apostate church and denounce it in fierce judgment?"

Those who suppose such issues too trivial to produce a cleavage among us should be reminded that the split in Christendom producing the Roman and Greek churches was caused by the contention by one party that the Holy Ghost emanated from the Father only, while the other side held that He issued from both the Father and the Son.

The issue at stake is not so trivial as the Catholics would have us believe. It is more than "a rift within the lute," it is a crack within the foundation wall growing ever wider and deeper until the complete collapse of nominal Christianity is threatened. It is more than a tolerable difference of opinion in incidental details. It is a nullification of the commonly recognized charter of the Church Evangelical.

In practically every denomination, great theological colleges, gifted and eminent teachers, as well as church periodicals are being converted to the evangelical faith. They assail the Bible as to its authority and its accuracy. They deride the atonement and all who believe it.

Rationalism, on the one hand, and ritualism on the other, are the wedges at the root of the cleavage which are revealed in such statements as the following:

"The epoch we are now entering surpasses that of the Nicene age which still held to an authoritative orthodoxy except as a survival has passed. So increasing is this open-mindedness that American Protestantism is now freed from any of those anxieties which disturb it when Mr. Ingersoll could be regarded as a veritable Anti-Christ." (He might have added because the church has adopted precisely the same viewpoint as Mr. Ingersoll, Prof. Shaller Mathews, Dean of the Divinity School of Chicago, first president of the Federal Council of the Churches in America, the inspiring genius of the Forward Movement.)

"Protestantism is bourgeois Christianity—shaped to suit the trading and manufacturing classes but in promise and potency the coming Christianity is more fully and truly here in the labor movement than in Protestantism or Catholicism." Dr. Salem Bland of Broadway Methodist Tabernacle, Toronto.

"Gone are the old ideas of religion. Gone is the old notion of the efficacy of prayer, of the authority of the Scriptures, of the deity of Christ, gone even is the former view of the immortality of the soul and there is in its place the modern idea of efficiency which emphasizes temporary success and does not answer the question of the rest of the spiritual."—Prof. Foster, formerly of Toronto.

"We have broken definitely and, I think, finally with that old theory of things which ruled western civilization for nearly two thousand years. It is not merely that, or that part of the theory—Virgin-Birth, Resurrection, Ascension—has failed to stand the wind and weather of our day. It is that the new theory itself has gone to pieces. The notion of a guilty person being pardoned and justified through the atoning death of an innocent, divine Saviour is, to put it plainly, a form of immortality. The custom of ministers reading lessons and taking texts from the Bible creates the impression that the Bible is for us what it was for our great grandmothers. They proceed as if nothing had happened. It is time this conspiracy of silence on the part of the pulpit ceased."—Rev. R. Roberts, in one of the pamphlets for the Million published by the Rationalistic Press Association.

An American university professor refers to the Lord as "Mary's illegitimate Son" and added that his own son could grow to be such a man as Jesus of Nazareth but there was no reason why he should set him on a pedestal.

The writer has occasion to stray into the theological department of the library of one of our great universities and taking up a book much used by young men in training for the ministry read the following: "Criticism is unusable any longer to hold the Acts and Epistles or to a selection of them."

A commentary on the Gospels had the following: "Thus for the whole birth and childhood story of Jesus in its every detail, it is possible to trace a pagan substratum."

Another, written by the professor of Hebrew and Old Testament in the institution of the Sabbath as pagan originating in Babylon from whence also came the account of the flood and said that not until later days did the Israelites claim for their God the supreme position of creator.

This is the real issue which is driving the forces of "the new world Protestantism" into two camps, the one seeking to approach God through an offering of good works from the natural or unregenerate man seen, for instance, in "The Heaped-up Beauty in Modern Pulpit" where flowers are transformed into rhythm the bloodless theology of Modernism or by the way of Cain.

The other seeking to draw near to God condemned because of sin, believing in the death of the Saviour as a ransom or price paid to God for the redemption of the sinner, as a propitiation to appease, not an angry God but a God whose justice must be vindicated in letting a guilty sinner go free, as a sacrifice for sin.

The cleavage in Protestantism is being precipitated, not only by the Rationalistic wedge but by ritualism of which we have the following amazing evidence. The Bishop of London as reported in The Sheffield Independent of Oct. 8th, 1919, said as follows:

"The scheme arrived at after two years conference with the Wesleyans was that after the first of January, 1921, there should be no ordinations in either church which were not considered valid by the other. There would be a bishop with the presbytery at the laying on of hands, and at the end of forty years there would be no Wesleyan minister who would not have been ordained by a bishop of the Church of England, in order to get Wesleyan ministers episcopally ordained at once twelve presbyters would be consecrated bishops. "It was certain," added Bishop Ingram, "that other churches would join us, and he believed the time would come when they would be in close connection, not only with the churches of Greece and Russia, but with the church of Rome."

It is for this high-handed rebellion against God and His revealed word—this open and unexpected treason against the church evangelical, which has called forth not one word of protest as far as we know from the high courts of the church recently in session that thousands upon thousands of true believers in "our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ" are being forced to take a positive stand. Separation has begun and it is hoped will be finally consummated in the Conference on the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith now in session in Chicago, where seven thousand delegates are expected June 13th to 20th, the 16th being set apart as a day of waiting upon God in prayer and fasting, the chairman of which is Dr. W. B. Riley, the executive secretary, Dr. Robert Russell an ex-moderator of the American Presbyterian Assembly.

The call of God to a closer fellowship of all believers without reference to sect will doubtless be heeded by thousands more as the real character of the Forward Movement, so cleverly hidden in the beginning, becomes more apparent as New Theology camouflaged in evangelistic and missionary appeal and borrowing every phrase of evangelistic faith but one—sin in relation to Calvary.

Because the light shed upon the Forward Movement and of its fearlessness, faithful testimony against infidel Christianity The Sunday School Times has recently been subjected to a storm of adverse criticism from its secular papers who decline to lend their columns to a hearing of the defence of the friends of the Times. The time has come for parents to decide as to whether they will place their children under those who, denying the authority of God's word and every fundamental of the faith are bringing upon themselves and their posterity a reign of lawlessness and anarchy terrible to contemplate when, left loose from all restraints, they will slide down through sensuality into such degradation as pre-arranged in Russia, or whether they will place them under Godly influences seeking their salvation from sin.

The rival forces of Christ and Satan are gathering for a life and death struggle. People of God! Can we afford longer to "see the mighty hosts of sin advancing, Satan leading on"—can we permissive the desperateness of the position and turn a deaf ear to the call of the "despised and rejected" One—"Come out of her, My People, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not her plagues." May the crisis mark the gathering of a true "ecclesia" or called-out body which was the purpose of God for this age! God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His Name," not by making the church co-extensive with the world by preaching a universal salvation, but by spiritual regeneration.

COOLIDGE'S CAREER.

Nicknamed "Law and Order" After Boston Police Strike. Calvin Coolidge of Northampton, Mass., nominated by the Republicans for the vice-presidency of the United States, although in public life in his adopted state almost ever since his graduation from Amherst College in 1895, was little known outside of Massachusetts until the greater part of the police force of Boston went on strike in September, 1913.

Coolidge was governor of the state. He ordered out the state guard to patrol the streets of Boston after a night of rioting, announced that law and order would be preserved and declared that the strikers were deserters and that their places would be filled by other men.

The strikers never regained their positions. Troops maintained order for several weeks and a new police force was recruited. The stand taken by the governor carried his name to all parts of the country and in his own state he was promptly nicknamed "Law and Order Coolidge."

As the presidential campaign of 1920 approached his admirers tried to induce him to become an active candidate for the Republican nomination for president. They had gone as far as to open headquarters for him in Washington and Senator Henry Cabot Lodge had offered to present his name to the national convention if the governor so desired, when he announced publicly that he was not a candidate and that he considered that was his job as governor his job was at the state house.

Calvin Coolidge was born on a farm in the little village of Plymouth, Vermont, on July 4, 1872. His father, in addition to carrying on the farm, was the village store-keeper. Coolidge's ancestors from the time John Coolidge settled in Waterbury, Mass., in 1630, were all farmers.

Young Calvin worked on the farm and in the store and attended the village school. He then went to the Vermont towns of Ludlow and St. Johnsbury and Amherst College.

He studied law in the office of a law firm in Northampton to such good effect that after twenty months' fighting at the law books he was admitted to the bar. He opened a law office in the same city and continued to practice there until his public duties occupied all his time.

His first public office was as member of the Northampton city council in 1899. Successively he was city solicitor, county clerk, state representative for two years, mayor for two years, the last two serving as president of the senate and lieutenant-governor for three years.

In 1918 he was nominated by the Republicans without opposition for governor and was elected by a plurality of about 11,000. He was re-nominated in 1919 and elected by the plurality gained through

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