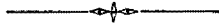


caged bird in Jerusalem, his royal city."<sup>1</sup> "Notons en particulier," remarks an able French writer, "cette phrase étonnante, 'Je le renfermai dans Jerusalem sa ville royale.' Chose significative, il ne dit pas qu'il ouvrit le cage, et saisit l'oiseau; et s'il ne le dit pas, nous pouvons être assurés qu'il ne le fit pas."<sup>2</sup> This most justifiable inference is, in fact, the explanation of the matter: Sennacherib was unable to take Jerusalem, and *that* was the reason for his denying the royal title to Hezekiah of Judah.

The fact that on the Memorial Tablet, line 15, Hezekiah is styled "King of the wide district of Judah," does not invalidate the above argument, for in the inscription on the tablet Shuzub of Babylon also receives the royal title. The fact is that a certain military, or rather imperial, censorship was exercised in the case of the cylinder, which was not exercised in that of the tablet. The title "king" is also given to Hezekiah on the Bull Inscriptions, Nos. 2 and 3, line 21. The description of the Palestinian Campaign on these Bulls is very brief, occupying only five lines, and the same is the case with the Memorial Tablet, where it is summed up in three short lines. Shuzub of Babylon is not mentioned on Bulls 2 and 3.

CHARLES BOUTFLOWER.



#### ART. VI.—THE CHURCH CATECHISM AND THE TEACHING OF ETHICS.

**D**URING certain months of the year there must be some thousands of clergy simultaneously engaged in giving instruction preparatory to confirmation. For this purpose there is one authorized text-book, or syllabus of subjects, namely the Church Catechism, as found in the Prayer-Book. This text-book has in its present form been employed for this same object now more than two hundred years. There must be many clergy alive to-day who have used it for the same purpose for nearly half a century. And I believe that I am speaking the truth when I say that increased acquaintance with its contents only deepens the conviction of its wonderful adaptability, amid the ever-changing circumstances of life, to the purpose for which it was designed. Experience in its use only serves to reveal how much it explicitly states and implicitly

<sup>1</sup> iii. 20.

<sup>2</sup> See "La Campagne de Sennakhérib," by Georges Martin; Montauban, 1892.

suggests, how it embraces with wonderful richness the whole range of Christian doctrine and Christian conduct. In teaching from the Catechism, instruction naturally falls under three chief heads: (1) history, (2) doctrine, (3) conduct. It is in the way in which these three are combined, and shown to be mutually dependent on each other, that one chief excellence of the Catechism consists; and what God has joined together we shall, at our peril, try to separate. Of these three, doctrine is, of course, the middle term. As the late Bishop of Durham so well expressed it: "The fruit of history is doctrine; and doctrine is the interpretation, the guide, the motive of life."

I would now state a question forced upon some of us by a long and somewhat varied experience. During the last few years it has been my privilege to take more than thirty courses of instruction preparatory to confirmation. In these classes there have been candidates (of both sexes) of almost every age, and of almost every class of society and degree of general education. Many of them have been grown up intelligent men and women; not a few have been public-school boys, and girls educated in some of our best high schools and ladies' colleges; there have been many from the higher-grade schools in our largest towns; while the majority of the remainder have been those whose education had been "finished" in elementary, board, and national schools. Taking them all together, I have little hesitation in saying that the vast majority have come to the confirmation classes with at least some knowledge of the *letter* of the Catechism, and not a few could repeat the whole of it correctly from memory. A smaller, but still a quite respectable proportion, have had at least some knowledge of its doctrinal meaning—that is, they could explain or paraphrase (if generally in somewhat too technical phraseology) the meaning of many of its statements, and they could often point out and quote passages of Scripture upon which these statements may be said to be founded. But, except in that portion of the Catechism dealing with the Ten Commandments, and the Duty towards God and towards our neighbour, *very few indeed* could give any intelligent explanation of the bearing of its doctrinal statements upon the conduct of everyday life; and in this respect, as far as I can learn from clerical friends and acquaintances, I have no reason to suppose that my own experience has been exceptional. As an example of what I mean: it is very rarely indeed that I have been able to get an intelligent reply to such questions as, "What ought to be the result on our daily conduct of a belief in 'the Holy Ghost' or in 'the Holy Catholic Church'?" Yet as a compendium of Christian *ethics* founded upon Christian

dogmatics, the Church Catechism is probably unrivalled; indeed, were I asked to state its claim to pre-eminent usefulness, I should answer that it lay in its constant assertion of the implicit, *inevitable* connection between these two.

It is probably quite unnecessary to call attention to the *existence* of this common failure to connect conduct with doctrine; it may not, however, be useless to inquire into some of the *causes* of the failure, and to suggest that every possible means should be taken to remove them.

Most Churchmen are only too familiar with the attacks which are constantly being made upon "catechisms and creeds," and, indeed, upon dogmatic teaching generally. "What is the use," we are asked, "of your making such great sacrifices for the right, or privilege, of teaching your catechism in the national schools?" "The children," so they assert, "do not understand it, and, if they did, they would not practically be any better for it." If my own experience is not singular, I am driven to confess that there is some justification for the position of our critics; and if these will allow me to add the words, "as it appears to be generally taught," I am driven to allow that there does not seem to be any great usefulness in the present method of teaching the Catechism.

Who, then, is to blame? Ultimately, I fear, the clergy themselves must bear the responsibility. If the following experience is not exceptional I can hardly blame the masters and mistresses of our Church day-schools. Quite recently I read through most carefully the four sets of questions on the Church Catechism set by the diocesan inspectors of a certain diocese to the four years of pupil-teachers in the annual examination in religious knowledge. With the exception of the few questions dealing with the Ten Commandments, I could find hardly a single question tending to show that the pupil-teacher was expected to be able to explain that there was any *necessary* connection between the truths inculcated in the Catechism and the conduct of everyday life. Yet skill in doing this would surely be more useful to teachers of young children than the knowledge requisite to answer the three following questions: (1) "Show from Holy Scripture that we are 'by nature born in sin,' and are, by Baptism, made 'children of grace.'" (2) "What do you gather from the Catechism to be the reason of the difference of a Deacon's powers with regard to the two great Sacraments?" (3) "Give instances of our Lord uniting miraculous results to the use of outward and visible signs." [This last question, by the way, is surely dangerously suggestive of the *opus operatum*.]

But suppose the teachers in our Church day-schools know

that they are not *expected* to show a knowledge of how doctrinal truths bear upon everyday life; are they likely to study the practical applications of these truths? Are they, in their teaching, likely to impress applications on their scholars? As an answer to the above criticism I may be reminded that it is not only the teachers who give regular instruction in our day-schools; much of that instruction, we shall be told, is given by the clergy themselves. Is this true generally? Here is evidence which tempts me to doubt it. In a quite recent episcopal charge, given in a small diocese, we read: "In your returns I find this startling fact, that in 104 schools of the diocese no regular religious instruction is given by the clergy." Before now the clergy have been charged with making a fetish of their day-schools. But to what purpose is it, if they fail to use the opportunities for practical religious instruction which their possession is assumed to give? And if it is easy to make a fetish of the school, it is equally easy to make a fetish of the Catechism. It is well to demand that it should be correctly learnt: it is hardly possible to have too many useful formulæ stored in the memory. It is still better that it should be intelligently understood. But it is of far greater importance that its usefulness should be realized, and that its helpfulness towards right living and right conduct should be proved.

It is, I believe, far more easy to teach theoretically than practically; it requires far less thought on the part of the teacher to "get up" a string of texts in support of doctrinal formulæ than to learn how (1) to resolve such formulæ into entirely untechnical or untheological language, and then (2) to think out fresh and living practical applications of these truths which shall be intelligible to the average child mind. It is far easier for a pupil-teacher to learn how to answer such a question as, "What arguments can you give in favour of the baptism of infants?" than how to answer such questions as (1) (*α*) Explain in ordinary everyday language comprehensible by children the sentence: "I heartily thank our heavenly Father that He hath called me to the state of salvation"; (*β*) explain how the children may *show* their thankfulness; and (*γ*) give illustrations of people being in "a state of salvation"; or (2) "Give illustrations from everyday life to show how important it is that we should 'believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith.'"

It is surely unnecessary to point out what a wonderful scope the Catechism does afford, and the wealth of suggestion it does offer for the highest and most practical ethical teaching. To take only a single fragment in the mention of the double name—the Christian and surname—we have at once the

thoughts of individual responsibility, and of hereditary influences. The individual is part of a family whose roots go back far into the past, yet, as a Christian, he is endowed with a new life and with Divine gifts, by which, if rightly used, he may overcome inherited tendencies towards evil. Very soon after birth he is made a member of the Christian society; he lives as a definite member of the spiritual body, and enjoys a peculiar relationship to God; he has both individual and social responsibilities; besides becoming a citizen of a nobler commonwealth, he has gained a higher and purer individuality. In both ways he has lost the mere world-life to find a better life. Henceforth his object, as the object of the society of which he has become a member, is to live a life governed and regulated by the Divine Will and the Divine Law, revealed by the Divine Law-giver. He is, then, in a true sense an heir of—because he shares in the blessings and privileges of—that kingdom which is not only divinely ruled, but whose subjects love to obey the Will of God. With these *privileges* go certain *responsibilities*, for he has entered into a *covenant*, which has been made for him, and which he will personally ratify at confirmation. The idea of the covenant is one rich in applications.

To take another example: Very few young people clearly realize that belief ultimately rules, or should rule, conduct; and that for right and successful living right convictions are of vital consequence. Experience in teaching will always be suggesting fresh illustrations of a truth like this. We shall ask, Why, in time of sickness, is a particular doctor summoned? Surely because of faith in his knowledge and skill. Why is a particular investment made with our money? Because we believe the bank, or railway to be sound and successful. Why, on a holiday, do we choose a particular road to a certain place? Because we believe it to be the nearest way. Then the evil results of false belief, or ignorance, in every case may be pointed out.

In short, we must impress upon those we teach the *value* of doctrine. We must lead them to realize that the Catechism does not merely instruct us in what to think, but *how to act* in the ordinary occupations and relationships of everyday life. It contains the rules of a society—namely, the Christian Church. It is the instruction-book for the members of that society in the actual warfare of life. But what is the Christian life, and what is the Christian society? “The Christian life is the true human life, and Christians become true men in proportion as they live up to it . . . the right relations between the members of the Christian society are simply the normal relations which should subsist between members

of the human race."<sup>1</sup> In other words, the Christian life is human life lived on the highest plane, and the relationships which should subsist between Christians are the natural relationships of everyday life perfectly discharged.

Thousands of young people go into the battle of life most imperfectly equipped, because they have not been taught the necessary connection between conviction and conduct, between doctrine and everyday action. They have not been taught how to use weapons of long-tried and well-proved efficacy, which yet are lying ready to their hands. When they learnt at school the rules of arithmetic, they were set to do examples. The practical utility of the rules was at once forced upon them, and they have been, perhaps unconsciously, "doing examples" ever since. When the Catechism is taught, examples must be given: these must be "set" again and again. It is only by this method that the deepest and most important problems of life can be successfully worked out.

W. E. CHADWICK.

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## The Month.

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"OF a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." This was the text chosen by the Bishop of London for his sermon on the Sunday after the announcement of the King's illness, and it would be difficult to recall a more dramatic illustration of the words than was afforded by the events in what should have been Coronation week. When God's hand is laid upon anyone there is no alternative but to submit, whether the subject of His discipline be King or peasant. The Coronation and the festivities connected therewith had to be abandoned, and the nation, which, in spite of the growing spirit of worldliness, is at bottom religious, sought refuge in prayer. Who can doubt but that the speedy recovery of the King, in which the nation is now happily rejoicing, is due to the intercessions that have been offered in his behalf? The very day following the announcement of his illness some 3,000 or 4,000 people assembled in Queen's Hall and there engaged in prayer that, if it might be God's will, the King's life might be spared, and that His Majesty and the nation and empire might learn the true lesson of this national chastisement. This meeting was a representative and responsible one, the presence at it of the Bishops of London, Durham, Winchester, and Ripon showing that its solemn import was well recognised.

The business before the Convocation of Canterbury at the July group of sessions was not of a very interesting character. The Bishops missed a great opportunity when they spent a whole sitting in editing the Resolutions on Clerical Poverty sent up to them from the Lower House,

<sup>1</sup> Hort, "Christian Ecclesia," p. 228.