

is a pagan city with only a moderate leaven of Christianity in it and is slipping back deeper into paganism with every decade.'

ST. PETER'S ROMAN EPISCOPATE

DEAN BURKE AND BISHOP NEVILL

The following letter from the Very Rev. Dean Burke in reply to his Lordship Bishop Nevill appeared in the 'Otago Daily Times' of Thursday :-

'Sir,—I feel constrained to appear again in your columns, seeing the charges of dishonesty, effrontery, and deception made against me by Bishop Nevill in his recent gentlemanly letters. Your readers know by this time that he is unable to bring forward even one scrap of reliable, unmistakable evidence to support that "figment" over which he boasted so bravely some weeks ago. They know that, instead of supporting his thesis by argument and evidence, he has merely danced about, like a hen on stubbles, from one petty pin-prick to another—just trying, for appearance sake, to keep on saying something. Unfortunately for himself, he made one effort to allege two instances of evidence in his favor—one, the meeting of the Apostles; the other, the Sixth Canon of Nice. Both these instances tell against him! St. Peter, in speaking first at the apostolic meeting (A.D. 51), acted obviously as its president. His absence from Rome, supposing that he had undertaken the Roman episcopate at that date (some historians say Yes, some say No), could no more be alleged as a proof against such episcopate than Cardinal Moran's absence from Sydney could be alleged, centuries hence, as a proof that he had never been Bishop of Sydney. I see Bishop Nevill will make up "per-theorems" for us Catholics. They say an old dog cannot be beaten off his trot. It would, then, be much safer for him, when intending these "theorems" for newspaper publication, to consult some Catholic authorities rather than rely upon

The Malicious Travesties

of Littledale and Salmon.

(1) His monstrous mutilation of the Sixth Canon of Nice.—Having assured your readers, on his own authority, that the Pope had nothing to do with the presidency of the Council of Nice, and that the bishops present did not recognise him as "a bigger man" than any of themselves, Bishop Nevill goes on to mutilate the Sixth Canon: "They said in Greek, 'Let the ancient customs be preserved—viz, that the affairs of a province be settled in a province to which they refer; and it does not even mention Rome. After the words I have translated the Canon goes on to say, 'So that the Bishop of Alexandria should have authority over all affairs in Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis'—then follow Rome, Antioch, and other eparchs or provinces (Nicea Canon 6). Rather hard this on the successor of Peter, but perhaps this Council was too early for them to have found out who and what the Bishop of Rome was!" Now, Sir, in this short piece of episcopal argumentation there may be found mutilation, interpolation, distortion, and foolish comment! In his succeeding letter Bishop Nevill devotes half a column of similar stuff to the Council of Nice.

The Sixth Canon of Nice, say Neander and all decent historians, was enacted to protect the Bishop of Alexandria against the attempts of the violent schismatical Meletius, Bishop of Lycopolis, who withdrew from Alexandria's immemorial jurisdiction, arrogated equal rights to himself, and, by gathering around him all the discontented elements of the place, caused endless trouble in Egypt. The Catholic Church then, like the Catholic Church to-day, was most anxious to protect the established rights and privileges of every province and diocese. So to remove confusion in this case the Fathers of Nice declared that the immemorial privilege of the great Church of Alexandria, founded by Peter, through his disciple St. Mark, should be maintained. But hear the Canon itself:—"Let the ancient usage throughout Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis be adhered to, so that the Bishop of Alexandria shall have jurisdiction over all these; since this is also the custom of the Bishop of Rome. In like manner as regards Antioch and the other provinces, let each church retain its privileges." Compare this with Bishop Nevill's absurd distortion. You perceive that whilst making a Nicene arrangement of his own, he omitted the very point and kernel of the Canon as regards Rome—"epide kai to en te Rome episkopo touto sunethes estin"—"since this also is the custom of the Bishop of Rome."

This Important Clause

is so translated in the Latin version read at the General Council of Chalcedon, "Quoniam et Romano episcopo haec est consuetudo." So learned Protestant writers translate it—v.g.: "Since this is the custom also with the Roman Bishop" (Neander); "since this also is cus-

tomary with the Bishop of Rome" (Schaff). The obvious meaning of the Canon is this: Let the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Alexandria be protected because it is ancient, and, moreover (kai), it is the custom of the Bishop of Rome to recognise it. Antiquity and the Roman Bishop's recognition were the grounds for preserving the Alexandrian privileges. The interpretation is demanded by the meaning of the words (sunethes tini esti; consuetum est alicui; it is his custom); by the grammatical construction of the Canon and by the reasoning for the legislation. This is the interpretation we find placed upon this Canon in the declarations of contemporary and sub-contemporary Bishops and Emperors, in the pre-eminently accurate Roman "Scrinia" and in the "Acts" of the great early Council of Chalcedon. So the Sixth Canon of Nice, mutilated and distorted by Bishop Nevill to show that the Fathers of the first General Council of the Church did not recognise the Bishop of Rome as "a bigger man" than any of themselves, is, in the hands of theologians and historians, one of the evidences alleged for the Papal Supremacy! How scant must be his supply of "proofs" when he felt compelled to fall back upon the meeting of the Apostles and the Sixth Canon of Nice!

'Difficulties and replies.—In order to be as brief as possible, and at the same time touch upon as many as possible of Bishop Nevill's wandering objections, I shall compress my matter into the shape of difficulties and short answers. Difficulty 1.: Bishop Nevill does not know who presided at the Council of Nice, but he is cocksure no papal legates or deputies presided there—"earlier accounts do not so pronounce." Answer: All the earlier accounts we have do so unanimously pronounce. Socrates, the ancient Greek Church historian, the lists of the names of those who signed the conciliar documents, the accounts of Gelasius, Bishop of Cyzicus—all place Hosius and the Roman priests Vitus and Vincent first, even before the exarchs or patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch. Why? Simply because they were the representatives of

the Supreme Bishop Sylvester of Rome.

'On the festival of St. Sylvester we find even the ancient Greek Liturgy saying, "Thou hast shown thyself the supreme one of the Sacred Council (Nice), and hast illustrated the throne of the supreme one of the disciples"—Peter. Difficulty 2.: Bishop Nevill, with Henry VIII. on the brain, is rather inclined to think that the unbaptised catechumen, Constantine the Emperor, was "the real president." Answer: Too ridiculous to need reply. Listen to Hosius addressing Constantine: "Concern thyself not with ecclesiastical affairs, nor teach us in such matters, but rather learn from us. To thee God has given the Empire; to us He has given the things of the Church." And Constantine, unlike Henry VIII. or the Bishop, frocking and unfrocking Elizabeth, took the lesson kindly and humbly. Difficulty 3.: Bishop Nevill says that with something like "effrontery" and "the only imaginable motive"—to deceive your readers—I make the dreadful statement that the "Acts"—i.e., the history of the general transactions—of Nice were lost; then he solemnly and at great length proceeded to communicate to an innocent world a fresh and profound piece of historical information—namely, that the Nicene Creed and 20 Canons and a synodical letter are preserved! Answer: The boys of the Sixth Standard in my school know from their sixpenny "Church History" that those 20 Canons are preserved! Every old woman who goes to Mass on Sunday knows that the Nicene Creed is preserved, for she has it in her prayer book, and she hears it read!

'Bishop Nevill has occupied nine and a half columns of your paper mostly with historical matter of this profound kind; the rest he has filled up with miserable attempts to make little points, and with insinuations as to dishonesty, deception, and so on. But even in these insinuations he is not original. The pages of the lovely Littledale, whom he reads, admires, and recommends, are full of them—the pages of Littledale, "vituperative and brutal," "the untrustworthy compiler of rude congeries of fallacies and erroneous statements"; of Littledale "whose name should be received with a howl of execration by those whom he has duped." The burden of the song of this man so described by his own reverend co-religionists, is the dishonesty and deceit of Roman controversialists! Verily, men judge of others from themselves.?

'(2) "Sardica!" "The obscure Synod of Sardica!"—Bishop Nevill, makes a great ado because I quoted meagrely from this Council. Compelled to follow his dance from one Littledalean difficulty to another, I was confined for want of space to mere references, indications, and the shortest quotations. I certainly have been unjust in that way—unjust to my own case. But I have always wished to be generous with him, did opportunity allow; hence I shall now quote Sardica for him at some length. In the collection of Dionysius the Little the Third Canon reads thus: "If any bishop shall have been