

been one of the targets for the attacks of Protestantism,' and adds that it is surely not becoming for a minister of Protestantism 'to lower his opposition and commend the adoption of one of the enemies' means of control.' Yet he lets us understand in the next breath that use of the confessional idea is only a seeming approach to Catholicism, because the thirst to confess, to confide, is a universal impulse of the troubled human heart, and he considers it rationally from the standpoint of religious psychology:

'The awful secrets which men carry in their lives create a hunger for confession which gnaws out the heart of happiness. They also produce a mental atmosphere of fear, which is inimical to all mental and physical health. They keep all powers of the soul hampered under self-depreciation and self-condemnation. Faith as an expression of optimism, satisfaction, happiness, confidence, assurance, hopefulness, cheerfulness, courage, and determination becomes impossible. Fear and dread make possible the free action of pessimism, dissatisfaction, grief, anxiety, despondency, hatred, worry, moroseness, anger, and vacillation. The soul life is lost in anarchy, while the physical appetites, passions, and lusts reduce it to the lowest level of earthly existence. Then it is driven by Remorse into the dark recesses of secrecy, and Dread watches the door lest discovery bring the sins of the life into the knowledge of men. With a delicate timidity the soul seeks opportunity for confession. This seems its only relief. Intuition teaches the process of unburdening and drives to confession. There is no relief from the rancor, darkness, bitterness, dread, and scourgings of conscience but through this process.'

In literature he cites *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Marble Faun* as providing examples of the poisonous work of the hidden sin in the human soul, which instances are duplicated in the researches of psychologists of to-day, and he tells us that the only relief is found 'in forcing a confession by hunting down the sin.' Moreover, he asserts that 'all forms of faith-healing are based upon this principle, that sin secreted works like a cancer on the soul, affecting both body and mind, and requiring for treatment inward acknowledgement and outward confession,' and he presents this picture of the life about us:

'In this age of highly developed mentality man is found struggling, on the one hand, to hide his sin, and on the other to confess it. In the conflict he is driven by pitiless forces, which play upon him at the expense of mind and nerve. Men of experience tell us that the most appalling condition exists in the mental world; that if we could see the multitudes groaning under the sense of a shameful secret it would startle us. This accounts for the increasing number of public confessions being made on the part of men who have gone wrong in political, commercial, religious, and industrial life. They are driven to confession.'

The Scriptures, too, we read, teach man that relief from sin is found in confession, and having quoted several passages on this point, he declares finally that:

'The Church which has a sound psychology on the human demand for liberation from secret sins will serve the Kingdom of Christ best. In the old days of the class meetings confessions were made to the relief of the soul, and sweeping revivals brought hundreds into the light of Christ by a public acknowledgment of their wrong-doing. Now the class meeting has gone, and the revival fails to reach the multitudes of men. How will the Church readjust herself to the new conditions? Not with a confessional established under ecclesiastical control, but with some form that will give men opportunity to confess their sins. A Protestant confessional would be a pastoral clinic which drew men to it because of their need, and which wins and holds their confidence because of the service rendered. Let us encourage and facilitate confession. It is good for the soul.'

The *Catholic Standard and Times* (Philadelphia) looks unfavorably on this and other movements toward establishing a Protestant confessional, because they 'are the outcome of emotion and do not originate in the doctrine or practice of any of the separated denominations.' Speaking of Dr. Sheldon's 'modified confession,' it asks:—

'Why modified? There is no such thing as modified sin or modified pardon for sin. The "power of the keys" is unconditional. Christ came to save sinners, but they must co-operate with Him in the work of redemption. They must do penance and resolve to sin no more—abandon once for all the ways of evil, for there is no half-way house on the road to salvation. Excellent as are the motives which animate Dr. Sheldon and other confessional-inclined ministers in favoring the practice, we cannot help thinking that the salve they offer to "the mind diseased" is of the sort which the Anglo-Saxons called "wanhope"—a delusive cheat, like that deception which "gives the word of promise to the ear, to break it to the hope." Honest Protestant ministers, while believing that it is part of their duty to indulge their flocks in the desire to confess their transgressions, acknowledge the inutility of the proceeding.'

RELIGIOUS BELIEF

AN INTERESTING JUDGMENT

A somewhat important judgment was delivered at Dannevirke on November 6 (says the *Napier Daily Telegraph*) by Mr. S. E. McCarthy, S.M., in a case in which Cyril Burrell French had applied for exemption in the Territorial ranks on the ground of religious belief. Mr. McCarthy, S.M., in his judgment, stated:

'This application is made pursuant to sub-section 2 of section 65 of the Defence Amendment Act, 1912, for exemption from military training and service on the ground that such training is contrary to applicant's religious belief. Sub-section 2 reads as follows:—"On the application of any person a magistrate may grant to the applicant a certificate of exemption from military training and service if the magistrate is satisfied that the applicant objects in good faith to such training and service on the ground that it is contrary to his religious belief."

'The applicant is a Christadelphian and has produced a quantity of literature emanating from that religious body with a view of establishing what its belief is with regard to military training and service. A portion of the literature consists of magazine articles written by members of the body. These articles profess to be founded on the authorised version of the English Bible, which is extensively quoted from in order to show that war is abominable to the Deity and is neither more nor less than legalised murder. I do not doubt that any member of any professedly Christian body and of many bodies which are not professedly Christian would willingly subscribe to these doctrines as counsels of perfection and ideals to be persistently striven after. Such persons would cheerfully admit that the civilised world to-day has departed from the whole-hearted simplicity of Apostolic times. Such expressions of opinion are to be found in the current literature of many professedly Christian bodies who do not object to military training and service. There was produced a copy of a petition addressed to Parliament by Christadelphians in the year 1899 praying to be exempted from military training and service on the ground of religious belief. This petition contains the following allegation (clause 2), namely:—"That they (the Christadelphians) are and always have been opposed conscientiously to the bearing of arms, whether for offensive or defensive purposes, on the ground that the Bible (which they believe to be the word of God) commands them not to kill, not even to be angry with their fellow men without a cause; to resist evil; to love their enemies, to bless them that curse them, to be good to them that hate them and persecute them, and to do unto all men as they would all men should do unto them."

'Now it is to be observed that much of this is familiar to students of the Bible and contemporary Christian literature. The mere fact, however, that we may not agree with the deductions against military service which it is contended the Christadelphians draw from the Bible is not sufficient ground on which to base a refusal of the application; for if that deduction

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