

Faith of Our Fathers

[A WEEKLY INSTRUCTION FOR YOUNG AND OLD.]

Of the Supreme Dominion of Jurisdiction Which God Has Over His Creatures.—(Continued.)

Q. 12. Are there any particular examples in scripture of this ready obedience in these creatures to the command of God?

A. Yes, there are great numbers, besides those that happened at the creation, which we have seen above (Q. 5, No. 1). Thus, Jesus Christ said to the leper, "I will, be thou clean, and immediately his leprosy was cleansed." To the good centurion, who with so great faith acknowledged this His sovereign dominion over all creatures, He made this reply, "As thou hast believed, so be done unto thee: and his servant, who was lying at home sick of the palsy, was healed at the same hour." When the disciples were overtaken at sea by a violent tempest, "raising up He commanded the winds and the sea, and there came a great calm; but the men wondered saying, What manner of Man is this, for the winds and the sea obey Him?" (Matt. viii). When St. Peter's mother-in-law was "taken with a great fever, He commanded the fever, and it left her" (Luke iv., 39): with many other instances of the like nature, of which the holy scriptures are full. What is still more surprising, all these creatures give Him this ready obedience not only when He speaks to them Himself in Person, but even when He gives them His orders by the mouth of His holy servants, who commanded them in His name; witness the great and wondrous things performed by Moses and the other prophets, and particularly that of Joshua who commanded the sun to stand still, and it obeyed him: and the wonderful cure of the lame man by St. Peter, when he said: "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk . . . and forthwith his feet and soles received strength, and he, leaping up, stood and walked, and went in with them to the temple, walking and leaping and praising God" (Acts iii., 6). To show the same supreme dominion of the Almighty over inanimate creatures, the scripture says, "He sendeth forth the light, and it goeth: He hath called it, and it obeyeth Him with trembling. . . . The stars were called and they said, Here we are, and with cheerfulness they have shined forth to Him that made them" (Bar. iii., 33). What amazing power! What prodigious dominion is this! of Whose commands nothing is insensible, to Whose orders no creature makes resistance, and Whose authority is felt, is understood and obeyed by the whole creation! How absolute! how unlimited is this Divine dominion!

Q. 13. How is this dominion of God essential to Him?

A. The meaning of this is, that the supreme dominion which God possesses, He has from Himself alone; it did not fall to Him by lot, He did not receive it by inheritance, it was not given Him by another, He did not acquire it by violent invasion, nor did He receive it from the election and by the consent of His subjects: He possesses it from Himself alone, it is essential to His nature, it is intrinsically due to His infinite perfections, He possesses it in His own right, because He alone is essentially worthy of it, and because all things are the work of His hands; hence, "The four and twenty ancients fall down before Him that sitteth on the throne, and adore Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor, and power; because Thou hast created all things, and for Thy will they are, and have been created" (Rev. iv., 10); and again, "I beheld," says St. John, "and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the ancients: and the number of them were thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and benediction. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them; I heard all saying, To Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, benediction, and honor, and glory, and power, for ever and ever" (Rev. v., 11). In another place he gives us a most awful description of this supreme Lord of all, who was pleased to appear to him in all the glories of His majesty; in these words: "And I saw heaven opened, and beheld a white horse, and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and with justice does He judge and fight. And

His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns, and He had a name written which no man knoweth but Himself. And He was clothed with a garment sprinkled with blood: and His name is called, THE WORD OF GOD. And the armies that are in heaven followed Him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth proceedeth a sharp two-edged sword, that with it He may strike the Gentiles. And He shall rule them with a rod of iron; and He treadeth the wine press of the fierceness of the wrath of God the Almighty; and He hath on His garment and on His thigh written KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev. xix., 11). In which glorious name, written upon His garment and on His thigh, it is clearly declared, that sovereign and universal dominion essentially belongs to Him alone; for as the scripture declares of God that *Almighty is His name* (Ex. xv., 3); because Almighty power essentially belongs to Him; so here He carries the awful name of *King of kings and Lord of lords*, because He no less essentially possesses the most absolute dominion over all creatures.

Q. 14. What is meant by saying *this supreme dominion of God is inalienable*?

A. This is a necessary consequence of its being essential to Him, and means that this supreme dominion over all creatures can never be diminished, can never be restrained, can never be lost or taken from Him; He can no more cease to be subject to Him, than they can cease to be creatures: hence He is called in scripture, the God of dominion, for thus the wise man says, "There is one most high Creator Almighty, and a powerful King, and greatly to be feared, who sitteth upon His throne, and is THE GOD OF DOMINION" (Eccles. i., 8). For this reason His dominion, like Himself, is an eternal dominion and must remain for ever and ever: "Thy kingdom," says David, "is a kingdom of all ages, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations" (Ps. cxliv., 13). "His power is an everlasting power, and His kingdom is to all generations: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing before Him, for He doth according to His will, as well with the powers of heaven as among the inhabitants of the earth, and there is none that can resist His hand, and say to Him, Why hast Thou done it?" (Dan. iv., 31). "And all people, tribes, and tongues shall serve Him: His power is an everlasting power that shall not be taken away, and His kingdom shall not be destroyed" (Dan. vii., 14); and therefore, "To the king of ages, immortal, and invisible, the only God, be honor and glory, for ever and ever, Amen" (1 Tim. i., 17).

Obituary

MRS. ELLEN MARY ENGLAND, AUCKLAND.

There died recently at Rawhiti Private Hospital, Auckland, Ellen Mary England, sister of Mr. Thomas Condrick, "Cranna Farm," Tikokino, Hawke's Bay. She was born at Cranna, Co. Tipperary, Ireland, fifty years ago. On coming to New Zealand she settled in Wellington, where her husband died about thirteen years ago. The late Mrs. England afterwards came to Auckland where, entering into business, she resided until her death. The deceased was very popular and a dear friend to all who knew her. Much sympathy is felt for her brother (her only relative in New Zealand) and also for her two brothers who reside in Ireland.—R.I.P.

MRS. BRIDGET BUTLER, AUCKLAND.

Many old colonists of New Zealand will learn with regret of the death at the age of 77 years, of Mrs. Bridget Butler, for many years resident at Coromandel and Thames in the early days. The deceased was the eldest daughter of the late Mr. James Sullivan, who was a very old resident of Thames and Onehunga, and arrived in New Zealand nearly sixty years ago. She resided for several years with her father at Coromandel and Thames, and married Mr. Alfred Butler, of Thames, where they lived for many years. Some twenty-five years ago her husband accepted the position of assistant manager at the State coal mine in Greymouth, where they remained until his death four years ago. Six years ago was celebrated their golden jubilee, an unusual event in those days. The deceased (who was a sister of the late Mrs. Mary Mahoney), was likewise loved and admired by all who knew her, and, upon her death, many will grieve for the passing of another fine woman of the past generation.—R.I.P.