

THE RIGHT TO ENSLAVE MIND.

A Lecture Delivered in the Methodist Church by Rev. C. C. Stratton, Pastor.

Rev. C. C. Stratton's lecture in the Methodist Church on Sabbath evening was listened to by a crowded auditory, scores having to leave the building for want of room. The lecturer gave as his subject the right of man to enslave mind; if any being in the universe, he said, possesses this power it is God. But in creating his intelligent creature, this great Being implanted in his breast the instinct of independence. He has given us intellect, sensibility, will; and having these endowments, it is fair to assume that God intended them to be exercised. The possession of an organ is fair evidence that it was created for use. Our eyes reflect light and objects upon the brain, and are designed for the purpose of seeing. We have ears to communicate sound to the brain, and these are designed for hearing. So with our nostrils and the other physical senses. It is God's design that we should use our own organs and not depend upon those of another. The same holds true with the faculties of the mind. We are required

TO USE OUR OWN REASONING POWERS, to be impressed with our own sensibilities, to be governed by our own will. To let another do our thinking, feeling and willing for us, would be as foolish and as degrading as to see and to hear and smell through the senses of another.

God has never put his creatures into bonds. He has invited us to follow the path of virtue, and warned us against the walks of vice; but in all cases he has allowed us the exercise of reason and judgment. His dealing towards us is rather that of a parent towards his children than that of

CAUTELANT TOWARDS HIS SLAVES.

Having invested us with reason to judge and decide, he has never exercised control.

It is the province of reason to investigate the evidences upon which the Bible claims its divine origin. To sift the genuineness of its miracles, the truth of its historic statements, the fulfillment of its prophecy. In such a work reason is to be held supreme, and

FAITH SHOULD BE BASED UPON REASON.

When we read history, we inquire into the writer's sources of information, his competence to weigh evidence, and the spirit that prompts him in telling his story. The same with our scientific investigations. We have never weighed the sun, we have never measured the bulk and density of Jupiter. In all our inquiries we are guided by reason. If the facts presented to our knowledge are reasonable, and we become satisfied of their soundness, we then adopt them as our faith. Some merchants in Salt Lake do business with New York, who have, perhaps, never visited that city. They commit letters to the mails addressed to places where they have never been. In such transactions their faith is based upon reason. We thus find that faith is not confined to religion, but enters into our business, our scientific pursuits, and most of the affairs of daily life. The duty we owe to ourselves is not to deify faith, but to hold it subject to reason.

And as our Maker has never assumed the right to enslave our minds, neither has He

DELEGATED THIS DREAD POWER TO OUR FELLOW MAN.

This was shown in a hasty glance at ancient history. Among the early Jews, full liberty was accorded the stranger within their gates of remaining alien in his belief, adopting their faith, or of apostatizing after his adoption. The claims of the early Papal Church, the lecturer said, were not in harmony with the word of God, but in direct opposition to it. The rule exercised was authoritative, the reason of its followers was allowed no sway. The infallible Church prescribed what the faithful should believe and what reject, what ceremonial should be used, it instituted a celibate clergy, invented a purgatory for the punishment of souls, and meted out works of supererogation. The Pontiff arrogated to himself the right of setting up kings and deposing them, he absolved subjects from obedience to their rulers, and fulminated his bull of excommunication against recalcitrant king and nation. He assumed rule over wind, too. An *index prohibitory* contained a list of books which the devout Catholic must not touch, and the *index expurgatory*, gave the titles of works from which dangerous portions must be expunged. He dictated to the world how much of scientific development was to be accepted. Copernicus published his theory of the solar system for thirty-six years, and then published it with an apology to deprecate pontifical wrath. The book was placed upon the *index prohibitory*, and the faithful were debarred from reading it. Galileo afterwards endorsed this theory, having investigated the motions of the heavenly bodies with a telescope of which he was the inventor. His treatise was added to the *index expurgatory*; he was compelled to renounce his faith, to curse his scientific discoveries, and was then consigned to prison for life. Callistus III. excommunicated Halley's comet, and then set all the church bells ringing to frighten the portentous luminary away.

This pestilent meddling with the development of thought and the free exercise of our judgment, has always resulted disastrously to those who have practiced it. This long-continued Papal tyranny crushed out all refinement and learning, and

PLUNGED THE WORLD INTO THE DARK AGES.

The priests became so ignorant that they could not read the manuscripts committed to their care, and the people grew debased and slavish.

THEY HAD ABDICATED THEIR MANHOOD,

and now depended upon the Church for the control of their affairs. All this evil proceeds from man's abuse of his privileges. The lecturer then drew a vivid picture of the evils resulting to society from State tyranny, and illustrated this by describing the condition of France during Louis XIV's reign. *L'etat, c'est moi*, was a favorite saying of the pampered ruler, ("I am the State.") The government was one system of espionage, passports, edicts and regulations. The State regulated bequests, the supply of food, public amusements, literature, the tone of the journals, and the whole daily life of the people. A protective spirit, Buckle calls this, but the preacher regarded it as a domineering spirit.

Such a government produces frippery, servility, idle ceremonial, flattery. The nobles lived and breathed in Court favor, and the people just as helplessly depended upon the nobles for existence. Authors wrote to gain royal or noble patronage, popular approval was never sought after. But, by and by, the people began to investigate. Voltaire went to England to study the free institutions of that country; the Encyclopedists began a daring course of philosophical enquiry. This exercise of thought descended to the masses, and eventuated in the Revolution, in which the French nation plunged into the wildest excesses. In rending their bonds asunder they launched into anarchy, and in their redress of grievances made the most bloody settlement of which human annals bear record.

THIS INTERMEDDLING SPIRIT

characterizes the administration of our own local affairs. Those in authority have attempted the control of business. Goods must be sold in the interest of the Church—the all-seeing eye was the offensive emblem of our mercantile subjugation. The Church authorities assumed to control the disposal of property by instituting the Order of Litch, and vesting in the Trustee-in-Trust the title to the estates held by all its members, thus placing them under heavy bonds to keep the peace. The Desert Alphabet was introduced to isolate the people from communication

THIS THEY WOULD BE PLACED IN PAR-

SALAGE.

and should they ever feel disposed to become revolutionary, here was a curb-bit to hold their minds in subjection. This yoke extended to the most minute affairs of daily life. A man must take counsel if he wished to travel, if he designed to take a wife, about his business affairs, about investing his money, about planting a row of beans. The preachers dictate where he shall buy his groceries, how his wives and daughters shall dress, where he shall deposit his savings, what papers he may read, and with whom his family may associate. Such a system is of a piece with the undue assumption of power by pope and potentate, and results in disaster to the man who sets up for tyrant, and to the people who submit to his tyranny: "Has not Brigham Young become

INTOLERANT, IMPERIOUS, FRO-HEADED?"

Instead of encouraging a manly character in his followers, he has made them dependent, reverential. The lecturer had heard men abused in the Tabernacle, and they submitted to the outrage like curs. This because they had abdicated their manhood, had given up their independence, and had delegated others to think, and judge and feel, and see for them. The lecturer was sustained by the lessons drawn from history in saying that such a system could not last. The instinct of independence will assert itself, the functions with which we are endowed will demand exercise. "For," said the preacher, in the course of an eloquent peroration, "no man can abdicate his manhood without guilt, no man has a right to make himself clay in the hands of any potter. The faculties bestowed upon us are intended for our own use, and the man becomes a slave who yields their exercise to another.