

SCHOOL-BOYS' QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Sir,—When I sent the letter, which commented on Mr. Pope's paper, to THE EXAMINER my intentions were, not to start a controversy, but rather to give some prominence to a chapter of British History, which, though well known, is conveniently passed over by many who would explain the origin and progress of Christianity in England. Had the question at issue been one of doctrine, I would have hesitated to approach it; for debates on the doctrines of the different churches are most prolific sources of recrimination and hard feeling, and religion surely destroys what it should cherish when it causes even the slightest infringement of the great commandment—love thy neighbor as thyself for the love of God.

The subject being merely an historical one, I felt that I might freely discuss it, and I knew that the church had nothing to lose and everything to gain by the opening of History's pages.

Though not desirous of causing a discussion in drawing to Mr. Pope's attention some details which must, of necessity, change the tone of his paper, I was not the least reluctant to enter the realm of controversy provided the defender of contra views extended to me the same courtesy I accorded to Mr. Pope,—that is to put his name to his productions. I did not intend to answer the gentleman who signed himself "a School Boy" until he had summoned up sufficient courage to appear over his name for I object to beings like him coming out against men who give their names, for School Boy, Veritas and their likes, may descend below the level of the decent without serious loss to their reputations. Though I have urged this reason for not answering this one, I have been so incessantly importuned that to avoid further annoyance I have consented to take to the pen once more.

As many may read this who have not a school boy's questions at hand, and therefore cannot intelligibly follow the answers, I must quote his questions.

Question 1. Will Mr. Clarkin deny that Clement of Rome, writing about the year A. D. 95, asserts that St. Paul preached in the utmost limits of the west?

Answer. A "School Boy" is evidently the victim of a free translation.

For general purposes his translation is used so are "to the far west," "the bounds of the west" and other variations. Though all or any of these may suit him, he must recognize that we should not depend on those free translations in matters connected with either our faith or the history of our church. I have the original before me and the innocent cause of this excitement is the phrase,

ἐπι τέρμα της δυσεως εἶδον,— "going towards the boundary of the west." If he wishes to use Pope Clement's words as a premises from which to argue he must adhere to the text.

Question 2.—Will he deny that in Roman literature the "utmost limits of the west" meant Britain which was then the western boundary of the Roman Empire?

Ans.—As I do not remember meeting this phrase or its equivalent in any position in which I could identify it with Britain I can give no answer.

Perhaps the questioner, over his name, can cite some instances. If he looks at his atlas and takes Rome as the centre of the Empire he may be inclined to consider Spain as the "utmost limits of the west." Raymond, a good English churchman says: "It is the opinion of some ancient writers that the doctrine of Christ was first preached in Britain by the apostle Paul." He alludes to Pope Clement, Theodoret and others, in conclusion he says "by which it is conjectured the island of Britain is included" (that is naming the places in which St. Paul preached). Raymond quotes all the evidence, and more, that a "School Boy" and others have produced; yet he modestly concludes "by which it is conjectured

etc." How different are the attitudes of the historian and the sensationist!

Though there is no proof that St. Paul was in Britain there is no reason for saying he was not. He may have been in Britain. He may have made many converts,—though no tradition or record remains in proof; but if he had established the church there, there is little doubt but some evidence of it would exist. If the church were established, there is not the least reason to believe that it would not look to St. Peter and his successors for its guidance. To defend this assertion, I will quote from Theodoret as this good bishop of the Catholic Church is a special favourite with our friends. Having been thrown into prison by order of the Emperor, Theodoret sought redress from the Pope whom he styled Father of Christians and the "judge in matters of faith." In justification of his action in referring his grievances to the Holy See those are his words. "Si Paulus, praece veritatis ad magnum Petrum cucurrit, ut is, qui Antiochiae contenderet, ab ipso afferret solutionem, quanto magis nos ad apostolicam sedem vestram curramus." Translation: "If St. Paul, the herald of the faith, appealed to St. Peter, for the solution of the difficulties which disturbed the church at Antioch, how much more does it behoove us to have recourse to the Apostolic See?" While his case was pending he besought the Cardinal Rostus to urge the Pope to decide the question. "For," writes he, "the See of Rome has the headship and direction of all the churches throughout the world."

Question 3. Will he assert it as a historical fact that Eleutherus, Bishop of Rome, was called Pope?

Answer. This question is not explicit. This Pope has been and is referred to as Pope and Saint. Fox, in his Book of Martyrs says, "This Eleutherus, at the request of Lucius, king of Britain, sent to him Damianus and Fugatus by whom the king was converted to Christ's faith etc." So Fox, "a School Boy" and some others, have referred to this holy man without using any prefix. Perhaps this is not the information "a School Boy" wants. If he states his question clearly, and over his name, I may be able to supply what he desires. I cannot see the connection of this question with the case discussed.

Question 4. Will he deny that Gregory, Bishop of Rome, who sent Augustine to Britain in 597 A. D. denounced as the forerunner of Antichristianity a prelate calling himself universal Bishop?

Answer. I am delighted to meet this old acquaintance. True it is a little battered on account of being stood up to be knocked down so often, yet notwithstanding its age and this illusage it appears hale and hearty. Dr. Milner about one hundred years ago answered it in these words: "However as the authority of our apostle, Pope Gregory the Great, is claimed by most Protestant divines on their side and is alluded to by Bishop Porteus, merely for having censured the pride of John, Patriarch of Constantinople, in assuming to himself the title of oecumenical, or universal bishop, it is proper to show that this pope, like all others who went before him and came after him did claim and exercise the power of supreme pastor throughout the church. Speaking of this very attempt of John, he says: "The care of the whole church was committed to Peter, and yet he is not called the universal apostle." (Ep. Greg. I v 20). With respect to the See of Constantinople he says "who doubts but is subject to the apostolical see?" and again "when bishops commit a fault I know not what bishop is not subject to it." (See of Rome) (See L. ix 59). As no pope was ever more vigilant in discharging the duties of his exalted station than St. Gregory, so none of them perhaps exercised more numerous or widely-extended acts of the supremacy than he did. It is sufficient to cite here his directions to St. Augustine of Canterbury "We give you no jurisdiction over the bishops of Gaul because from ancient times, my predecessors have conferred the pallium on the Bishop of Arles whom we ought not to deprive of the authority he has received. But we commit all the bishops of Britain to your care, that the ignorant among them may be instructed, the weak strengthened, and the perverse corrected by your authority" (His. Bed. I. c. 27) (see Milner page 284). To this quotation from Dr. Milner may be added though perhaps unnecessarily the following facts which corroborate. Pope Gregory wrote to the bishops of Gaul: "Should any dispute arise about matters of faith, it is incumbent on you to apprise us of it, that, by our decision, we may definitively settle the point in question (Lib. v. Ep. 53 et-56). St. Gregory claims unceasingly to be the successor of "St. Peter Prince of the Apostles." He states (Epist. Gregori. v. 20.) that Christ gave St. Peter "the charge of the whole church". He regulated the succession of bishops in Spain (Registrum Gregorii)(Ewald)(Iud. vi 1912) Many other cases wherein he exercised the powers of his supremacy might be cited but enough evidence has been given to prove to anyone that when Pope Gregory repudiated the title "Universal Bishop" he had not cast aside his jurisdiction over the Church, but merely rejected a title which he considered would arrogate to himself alone the dignity of the Episcopacy making all other bishops appear but shadows of his authority. He in no place showed his supremacy more clearly or spoke more authoritatively, than when he reprimanded John of Constantinople for his attempt at using the offensive title.

Question 5. Will he deny that when Augustine came to Britain the British Bishops refused to cooperate with him calling him a stranger from Rome, and this refusal shows that at that time the British church was independent of Rome?

Ans. In my first letter I gave an account of the origin of the church in Britain. I showed that British Bishops attended two councils of the church, at both of which the supremacy of the pope was acknowledged, and some other facts for which please see EXAMINER of February 26th

I will not deny that the British prelates

did at first refuse to acknowledge the authority of St. Augustine and would not cooperate with him, but that this fact shows that they were independent of Rome at that time or at any time I deny. By the word independent I mean severed from and beyond the authority of. At the particular time that they resisted St. Augustine authority they were independent in the same sense that a rebellious subject is independent of his sovereign. See Lingard on this point. He says that the British prelates agreed to meet St. Augustine's but before doing so they consulted a hermit as to how they should act. This hermit advised them to watch Augustine and if he rose to meet them they should listen to his demand; if he did not they should condemn him of pride and reject his authority. St. Augustine remained seated on their approach both his reasons and his authority were consequently despised. Lingard also states. "In points of doctrine there had been no difference between them."

This refusal of authority, instigated by one man is the massive basis on which rests the claim that the British church was independent of Rome. Against this bulwark all argument is futile. Of what avail is the fact that the church was established by bishops sent from Rome. How little important is it that the Bishop of Auxerre was sent by the pope to regulate it. How trifling that the British Bishops at the Council of Sardica acknowledged that the priests of the Lord from each particular province should make reverence to the seat of Peter the Apostle: St. Augustine did not stand up to meet the British prelates; they thought he was proud and they would not bow to his authority, therefore the British Church was independent of Rome then and always.

I might cite more authorities to prove that this conclusion of School Boy's is false but I do not think them needed.

Question 6. Will he deny that when Wilfrid, Bishop of York, applied to the Bishop of Rome in 680 A. D., the Church of Britain put him in prison because he applied to a power to which the British Church owed no allegiance?

Answer. Another old acquaintance. I must deny this one. I will briefly state the facts of this case. Theodore who was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury by Pope Vitalian, wishing to break up the large dioceses under him, divided the diocese of Northumbria, of which Wilfrid was Bishop, into three, for each division of which he consecrated a bishop, thus depriving Wilfrid of his bishopric. Against this action Wilfrid appealed to Rome. Pope Agatho ordered that he be restored his diocese and with a copy of the Pope's decision Wilfrid returned home. King Egfrid (not the British church) in a plea that the document had been corruptly obtained, refused to carry out the Pope's order and Wilfrid was confined. Neither the King nor the Archbishop contested Wilfrid's right to appeal. On the contrary, they sent their own representatives to Rome thereby acknowledging the jurisdiction of the court. The Archbishop Theodore before his death sent for Wilfrid and the Bishop of London and asked the forgiveness of the man he had injured, and in his letter to King Ethelred assigns the authority of the Pontiff as the cause of his reconciliation (Epist. Theod. and Wilk. Eddins, c. 42, p. 74. Lingard, Anglo-Saxon church, vol. 1 note H.) The foregoing is abridged from Canon Croft's continuity of the E. Church.

Question 7.—Will Mr. C. contradict the learned historian of the Roman Catholic faith who says of the Britons (evidently Britons) "the independence of their church was the chief object of their solicitude"? To this the opinion of the learned Blackstone may be added, "The British Church by whomsoever planted was a stranger to the Bishop of Rome and all his pretended authority." (Com. IV, 8.)

Answer.—Who is the learned historian of the R. C. faith? It is impossible to identify him by this description; for the church has had many learned historians. I have no doubt but this quotation has been picked up in the works of some Catholic historian. In fact I have an indistinct recollection of meeting it, or something like it, somewhere. But it is likely, if the context were known it would convey a meaning differing by far from the one he suggests. He would convey the opinion that independence of the Roman Catholic church was the desire of the Britons, though the author may have meant that those people wished to have the church independent of the government. Good reasons for believing the latter to be the correct view exists when we consider the unjust imprisonment of Bishop Wilfrid by King Egfrid: at the present day the independence of his church is the chief object of every Catholic's solicitude when he gazes towards Rome and sees the Vicar of the Lord beleaguered by the Infidel.

The great weakness of a School Boy is that he gets a little of the truth, and in reasoning from it instead of from the whole truth like many a wiser man he entangles himself in error. A little of the truth, like a little learning is a dangerous thing. And now comes the opinion of the "learned." Blackstone, like thunder after the lightning's flash to stun the terrified. As no argument is used here, it is useless to bring argument in contradiction. I will simply quote opinion against opinion. I might give what Catholic authorities say of Blackstone when he touches, with that gentle touch of his on Catholic subjects but I will give the opinion of a Protestant. This is what Cobett, a Protestant, says of Blackstone "Blackstone, for instance, in his Commentaries on the laws of England, never lets slip an opportunity to rail against 'Monkish ignorance and superstition.' Blackstone was no fool. At the very time when he was writing these Commentaries and reading them to the students of Oxford, he was and he knew it, living upon the spoils of the Catholic Church, and the spoils of the

Catholic gentry, and also of the poor! He knew that well. He knew that if every one had had his due he would not have been fattening where he was. He knew, besides that all who heard his lectures were aware of the spoils that he was wallowing in. These considerations were quite sufficient to induce him to abuse the Catholic Church and to affect to look back with contempt to Catholic times." (Cobbett letter I page 13) This is the character of the learned Blackstone as written by a Protestant; so please Mr. "School Boy" don't quote him to us. I hope that in this letter I have given "A School Boy" the information he desires. If it were possible I would have endeavored to make my answers more complete; but space and my resources are limited.

In conclusion, I may say, that in future I will pay absolutely no attention to "a School Boy" or any other writer who does not give his name. Thanking you Mr. Editor, for your kindness, I bid a School Boy farewell

J. T. CLARKIN.
Ch'town, March 16.

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