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The Church's Sphere

An important question has been raised in connection with the controversy between the South Park Avenue Methodist church, of Chicago, and its pastor, Rev. Morton Culver Hartzell. Mr. Hartzell has taken an active part in "cleaning up" the neighborhood and has entered heartily into the work of the clubs which have been trying to purify and reform that section of the city. The criticism of his conduct reached the point of a protest and an effort was made to compel his resignation. The pastor's friends insist that the opposition comes from city officials who ought to be reformed, and that the Rev. M. Hartzell is being persecuted for righteousness sake. The question will be submitted to the quarterly conference which meets June 1, and the pastor has presented his side in the following statements:

"The time has come in the discussion which has been agitating the church for some days past when it is right and proper for me as your pastor to make a pulpit statement. My fundamental attitude is that I am not going to be put in the position of fighting to hold my pulpit. The questions that are before this church are questions of principle and not of personality. What is the legitimate work of a church in a modern city? What rights and what duties has a minister of religion, as a citizen in a community like yours? I stand for certain principles—the very principles which are involved in the present controversy.

"I believe in the broad evangelism that ministers to the physical, intellectual and social needs of men in the name of Jesus Christ, always with the supreme religious aim as the dominating power of the whole organization. I believe that the opportunity of this church is unsurpassed to become one of the most beneficial centers of evangelistic, educational and social power in the city of Chicago. The place is strategic and the time critical.

"I believe that it is the duty of the minister and the members of every church to be integral parts of the social life of the community. The idea that a Christian's public duty ends with loyalty to his church means that the church is a burden rather than a help to society, and is absolutely opposed to the whole ideal of Christ. The conception of a minister's work that would deny him liberty of speech and action in things pertaining to our common human life, strikes at the very ideals of genuine leadership. A minister of the gospel must be a man first or his ministry is ineffective.

"These things I believe with my whole heart. I can not and will not recede from them. It is the natural tendency of every organization to become conservative and put the comfort of the

Public Rating

These Aldrich-Payne republicans, who voted for revision upward and then go about peddling the miserable apology that the tariff bill is "the best that could be secured under the circumstances," really rate themselves a little bit lower—if possible—than they are rated by the people.—Kansas City Star, Rep.

organization itself above the very purpose for which it was created. Every church is likely to face such a test and this church can not escape her present ordeal.

"Such I believe to be the issues involved in this controversy. I may be wrong. I am a Methodist and I believe in Methodist polity. Some days ago I decided that instead of an acrimonious public debate, in which principles would be forgotten and personalities would be pushed to the foreground, the more proper thing would be for me to state as clearly as I could what I conceived to be the principles involved and then place myself without reserve in the hands of my ecclesiastical superiors, the district superintendent and the bishop of the conference.

"This proposition has appealed favorably to all, and at an informal gathering of representative men of the congregation it was agreed that the quarterly conference should appoint a committee of three to wait upon the district superintendent and the bishop. This committee is to have no instructions from the quarterly conference and whatever the bishop decides will be acceded to by all.

"With this understanding, the chief purpose for the meeting of the congregation, called for the coming Tuesday evening, is accomplished. Furthermore, there is a difference of opinion as to whether a meeting of the congregation to elect trustees to fill vacancies may be held at this time, according to our discipline."

If, as Mr. Hartzell says, it is not a personal question, but a matter of principle, it will be interesting to see how the controversy is settled. Surely one must be very blind to the church's obligations if he condemns a minister for interesting himself in the work of social reformation. What is a church for if it is not to stand for morality in all things and everywhere? With so many ministers failing to hold up ethical standards in business and in politics, it would certainly seem a strange proceeding if a preacher is censured or driven from his pulpit because he refuses to be silent in the presence of evil.

If Mr. Hartzell is condemned, the conference ought to make it clear that he is condemned for personal reasons and not because of the interest he has shown in the "ethical, intellectual and social needs" of the people of his community. It is to be hoped that the conference will take occasion to encourage, rather than discourage, reforms, to the end that more ministers may measure up to their great responsibility and make the church potent in the advancement of righteousness.

A Blind Leader?

Senator Cummins, speaking as the representative of the progressive republicans, has declared war against the Aldrich crowd. That sounds good but the articles of war do not go far enough. The senator thinks that everything depends on the PERSONNEL of the republican organization. He is mistaken. The organization is a means to an end. Unless the new organization means to do something for the relief of the people a change from an Aldrich organization to a Cummins organization will mean nothing more than a transfer of salaries from one crowd to the other.

What does the Cummins organization propose to do? Will it give us free lumber and cheaper homes? Will it give us free wool and cheaper clothing? Will it reduce the cotton schedule and proceed with reductions until a revenue basis is reached.

If, after this winter's experience, Senator Cummins still insists that the tariff must be reformed by those who believe in using the taxing power for the purpose of protecting those interests which can secure the ear of congress he will prove a blind leader of the blind. Still the fact that he wants to fight is a good sign. Even if he does not go far enough to make his fight effective he may encourage a spirit of independence among republicans and other republicans may go farther than he is now willing to go. Another sign of weakness is his eulogy of the president. He will find the president with the Aldrich republicans and he can not make much headway.

IT PAYS

When Senator Dolliver returned to his home at Fort Dodge, Iowa, after his unsuccessful fight for some measure of tariff reform, he found 15,000 of his constituents waiting to greet him with cheers. Senator Cummins met a similar reception at his Des Moines home. These men may not just now stand high in the favor of the trusts that provide the republican party with its campaign funds, but it is enough for them to know that their patriotic efforts are appreciated by Americans of all political parties who have no axe to grind. It pays to take one's stand for the right, it pays to work for the public welfare. Reckoned in dollars and cents men who serve special interests may win what seems to be large profits, but real recompense comes to those who, doing their duty as they see it, render real service to their fellow men.

THE PROGRESSIVE DEMOCRATS

The Chicago News in commending the progressive republicans is guilty of unfairness toward the progressive democrats. It says that in recent years the progressive element in the democratic party "has not been of much service in compelling progress at Washington." That is a mistake; the progressive democrats have furnished practically all the stimulus that reform has received. All the progress made has been along lines pointed out by the progressive democrats. The democrats have furnished the bulk of the votes on nearly every reform proposition. The only exceptions were in the tariff fight where some of the democrats voted for low rates on certain raw materials. While the democrats erred in doing so it must not be forgotten that in the main they stood for reform.

CANNON'S APPOINTMENTS

Speaker Cannon violated every rule of decency and fairness when he used his power as speaker to reward members of the minority for helping the republicans. By every rule of fairness those who represent the minority ought to reflect the opinions of the minority.

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