

The frost line seems to be moving further South each year.

EUROPE EXPECTS ACTION

The Monroe Doctrine not only demands that other countries keep hands off, but it pledges the United States to maintain order on the Western Hemisphere, and that Europe now expects the United States to do at once.

That the Administration now has any settled policy many persons in the capital doubt, and even expert observers are tired of speculating on what the President eventually may do.

On the other hand, the constant movement of troops toward the border, the completion of arrangements for the transportation of forces to the frontier, the concentration of warships in Mexican waters and other activities in the Army and Navy might indicate some plan for positive action.

But the Administration continues to keep its secrets to itself, and as the Powers, from Asquith's statement, are not inclined to intrude, the secrecy will be maintained till the Administration may announce its policy.

The Powers have deferred to the Monroe Doctrine, but not the slightest doubt prevails that they would be glad to see the United States announce some policy which would promise results in the near future.

During the year 1912 the people of the United States consumed something over 62,000,000 gallons of mineral water, for which they paid nearly \$7,000,000. John Barleycorn and King Gambrinus are not the only potentates who impose a severe tax upon our people.

THOSE CLAIMS FOR COLOMBIA

Before paying too much attention to the claims of Colombia for reimbursement in the Panama canal matter, that are being sent out innocently from room 904, 35 Nassau street, New York, it might be well to see whether or not one William Nelson Cromwell is not in some way interested. He made a large sum of money in negotiating the sale of the interests of the DeLesseps people to this government, and it may be that his appetite is returning, and that he wants some more.

Southern papers say its cold "way down South" this year, but add that its bright and sunny, also, and that every 100 lbs. of cotton means fifteen good dollars.

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who even claim as one of their chief virtues that they do not belong to any church except the "big church," and who lose no opportunity to traduce and vilify the bride of the Lamb.

But to me at least, it is inconceivable that God should have established his church here at so great expense to himself if it were not a necessity in the plan of the world's redemption. I am perfectly willing to admit that on its human side it is far from being perfect, as everything that man touches is necessarily vitiated by the mark of his own imperfection. But such an admission neither alters the question of its divine origin nor argues that it shall not finally be presented to him blameless, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. When I stand at the historic sources of this great institution and witness the miracle of its formation; when I examine the sacred material entering into its foundation, and see upon the very altars of her dedication the blood of God mingling with the

blood of his martyr saints; and then when I hear the authoritative declaration of Christ: "Upon this rock I will found my church . . . and whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained"—I cannot but conclude that despite all the errors of judgment and the discrepancies of practice on the part of individual church members from the beginning to the present, she nevertheless stands out in the midst of time as the one heaven sent institution by whose authority alone the world is to be saved, and as such, her voice is not to be ignored in the final testimony for or against the individual. And furthermore, she cannot be substituted by any organization or system of man's devising. For "Whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder."

To those who are continually pointing out the imperfections of the present day church, it is sufficient to say that they judge the enterprise prematurely and uncharitably and their strictures are quite aside from the main issue. The church is no better than the aggregate of its members. The college of apostles was no better than the personal of the men composing it. Men are living under the warping effect of sin, and they cannot be completely changed in a moment even by divine power. And as the church draws no distinctions, being no respecter of persons, the people who come into its ranks are just the people who on yesterday walked the ways of the world, only having a different motive, and it requires years of self-discipline to hew off the rough corners and prepare them for honorable positions in the walls of the perfect building. You would not stand before an unfinished cathedral and pass judgment upon its unsightly appearance in the making; you would consult the architect's plan and wait for the finishing touches before venturing a judgment upon its symmetry. Why not be as reasonable with the church of God?

And then the conditions of church membership are few and simple. They are: repentance of former sins, and submission to the sacrament of christian baptism; these of course carry with them the demand for faith in God. It happens that there is much confusion in the public mind regarding just the thing which should entitle a person to become a church member and justify him in joining the church. There are plenty of people who think that the condition of membership is personal goodness. They may be impressed that it is their duty to attach themselves to the church but are kept back from doing so by the thought that they are not good enough to join. There never was a greater mistake. I undertake to say that if you were to eliminate from the church all who are unworthy you would not have enough members left to hold a Wednesday night prayermeeting if they were all present, which never happens. Who started this thing anyway? I challenge you to find a single intimation in all the word of God, that one's personal condition good or bad is ever made the issue in determining whether we should or should not join the church. It isn't there. If formal fitness were the test, all men might despair. I thank God that he has sent us out wherever men are living and commanded us to call them from all the walks of shame and vice and invite them just as they are into the fellowship of the saints, and that no man is unworthy to come who trusts in a personal Saviour and has a desire to flee from the wrath to come.

Then, having come into the church, there are certain privileges conferred upon us as believers. We become reconciled to God through the appropriation of Christ's satisfaction for sin; our past life no longer stands

against us in our account, with God; we are justified, not by the law, but by grace. Furthermore we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. And yet again, we are admitted to the common life and sacraments of the christian brotherhood. We become a part and parcel of God's spiritual building whose foundation is laid in the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Finally, in consideration of the privileges conferred by the church upon her members they in turn are expected to make a conscientious effort to live up to the high standard of that life and "to put on the new man, which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth." They assume certain vows and make certain promises at the time of their reception into the church, which cannot be lightly set aside or disregarded without the basest perjury.

Here followed a practical discussion of church vows, and the sermon closed with an appeal to the congregation to maintain a vital union with Christ and to justify their membership in the church by such activities as become the life of the gospel.

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