

Philander Chase Letters

8-15-1843

Letter to Philander Chase

Henry Onderdonk

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Phil a Aug: 15th 1843

Right Rev: & Dear Sir.

I recd your letter of the 31st ult: a few days ago, - & have deferred replying, to have more time for reflection. Of the case of W: Carey, I have not yet formed such an opinion as I should be willing to express officially. It is the misfortune or the fault of that gentleman, & of Dr. Seabury too, to be fond of saying the extreme of what can be said in favour of the general soundness of Rome, tho' they heartily reject her corruptions, - a practice whh I regard as very foolish at the best. It is true that the most, the only effective opponents of Rome, are those who have so investigated her case as to see & allow what she retains of good, & are thus able to expose definitely her errors, without mixing up with them her better features, - the common indiscriminate opprobrium cast upon her being a feeble warfare; - but Dr. S. & Mr. C. go farther, & seem at least to give her too much credit, instead of saying she deserves no approbation for any thing while she retains her abominations. In the course now censured, there may be danger to a few excitable individuals, but I see none to the Chh, - her character & principles are too conservative for that. Yet it is extremely annoying to have such concessions blazoned before the public, - who will dwell more on them, than on any counteracting remarks.

On the subject of a Pap for Texas, & let me add, of one for the Indians, I am disposed to be governed in my vote by the character of the individuals - also selected. If they are thoroly of the right sort, in

piety, attainments, & adaptedness to the respective stations, I should say, let them be consecrated. If not, no theoretical arguments will convince me that this ought to be done. What I mean is — that the men be chosen, or virtually so & in good faith, before the measure is even discussed in the Gen: Convention. — As to any special agreements of the Chh in Texas to avoid all heretical practices & other abuses, I see not how we can bind it further than its Constitution may provide. In our own case, we can, if we should be wicked enough, cast off liturgy, orthodoxy, & episcopacy, by the act of two Gen: Conventions; — & will Texas submit to closer restraints, implying, as it would, a suspicion of that Chh's constancy in the truth? The vow of conformity in the Consecration Office, must of course, in the case of a Pp for Texas, amount fully in substance to what it now is.

I fear the above thoughts are not as mature as they ought to be, — but it seemed to me most respectful not to delay any longer my answer to your letter.

With great deference & affection

Your friend & brother

H. W. Underdown

Pp: Chase



The Right Rev:

*Philander Chase D.D.
P. M.*

*Robins Nest
Peoria Co:
Illinois*

*151 Aug 5
1843*

W. H. Dr. Anderson