

world, the results of such discussions might be exchanged and considered so that in the end and before any final action is hastily taken by any branch, an attempt should be made to arrive at uniformity; considering especially the unhappy position of the Church in England in being obliged to submit the result to an unsympathetic Parliament, it seems to be a prudent course to ask such legislature to consent to a world-wide agreement. Dissent would then be very different to a local change and very unlikely to be effective.

Supplementary Services

in the meantime are suggested in every Church journal. One communication in the Church Times, while branching out into other debatable lines gives some useful precedents from early Elizabethan times. The following service was ordered by the Visitors to be said in early morning in Salisbury Cathedral: The General Confession and Absolution, the Litany as far as the verse "O Lord arise"; then a chapter from the New Testament and the rest of the suffrages following the Litany. The writer makes the following good suggestion: When a death has occurred in a parish, instead of the senseless custom (which he writes obtains) of the congregation standing after service, while the organist plays the Dead March, would it not be far more edifying and fitting the death of a Christian to have Psalm cxxx. said by the priest and people, Kyrie Eleison, Paternoster, and the first prayer from the Burial service.

Hymn Books.

The Scottish Chronicle is always welcome if for no other reason than the fact that the editor takes a deep interest in hymns and hymn writers. In a recent number there are some excellent criticisms on the selection of twelve favourite hymns by a Presbyterian congregation in the east of Scotland. But we regret that the able writer confines his criticisms and knowledge of English speaking hymn writers and their work to what he can find in one good but rather pedantic and narrow English collection. Let him rouse himself and see what progress has been made. If he will get from Henry Froude, the annotated edition of the Book of Common Praise, he will discover a hymnal of 795 hymns, and containing all the hymns both he and the Presbyterian divine refer to and many more, many of them by Canadian writers and composers of whom he has never heard, but the excellence of whose work we know he will acknowledge. Indeed we are sure that a careful examination of the work would result in its general adoption in the Episcopal Church of Scotland.

An Evangelistic Hymn.

In the number of our contemporary to which we have referred we find an unusual sermon by Dr. Walter Locke, Warden of Keble College, which contains this passage: "So we come in worship to thank God for the great blessings and possibilities that lie in the gift of life;" to "rehearse it in His Presence"; to set ourselves anew to use it aright. We would pray in the words of the Liturgy of Serapion—"Thou, O unseen Father, art the fount of life . . . make us, we beseech Thee, living men." Or those of you who are still young and strong may borrow the words which were found written in the Bible of a young Cambridge undergraduate who was killed in a railway accident:

"Just as I am—young, strong, and free
To be the best that I can be,
For Truth and Righteousness and Thee,
Lord of my life, I come."

What advice and what words for young men in our colleges and schools to pray and sing. The words are the fourth verse of hymn 705 of the hymn book, and the hymn itself is by Marianne Farmingham.

THE CENTRAL TEACHING OF LENT.

Life we believe has been scientifically defined as motion, death as stagnation, or cessation of movement. While we move we live. When we cease to move we die, or begin to die, which is the same thing. This is emphatically true in an intellectual and spiritual sense. Growth, or progress, or perhaps to put it more scientifically, if more vaguely, motion, is the law of life. The man whose mind is on the move is the man who is intellectually alive. The man whose mind has ceased to move has begun to die intellectually. So spiritually or morally. We live by keeping on the move, to use St. Paul's expression, by "pressing towards the mark." In other words, we keep morally and intellectually young by keeping on the move. We grow old by becoming contented with things as they are, and ceasing to press forward. Moral self-satisfaction, therefore, is as absolutely fatal to spiritual growth and life, as is intellectual contentment to mental life and growth. Against the tendency to gradually sink into this condition, Lent periodically protests. It comes as a reminder that spiritually we can only hold our own by going forward, or rather by trying to go forward. For after all the important and vital point is this, not so much are we gaining ground and achieving visible results, those will come in God's own good time, but are we fighting and striving. A swimmer may make no headway against the tide, strive he never so hard, but by striking out he keeps himself afloat, and holds his own. And so we keep morally alert and fit, and can only keep so, by unremitting war upon our failings. Self-contentment is fatal. It means stagnation, and stagnation is but another name for decay. But there is even a worse state than self-contentment or blindness to one's own failings. It is the acknowledgement of our failings as inevitable, the "making the best of a bad job," or the principle of what can't be cured must be endured. This is to grow morally old with a vengeance, and it is a very common state. Such people will frankly acknowledge, and even bewail their particular ruling failing, and then quietly accept it as a sort of burden imposed on them—and others, by Providence. They are "built that way," and it is no use attempting impossibilities, and anyway, "a fault confessed is half redressed," a most fallacious and dangerous and often demoralizing proverb, by the way. People can go on frankly "confessing" their faults till they become half proud of them. This is a most perilous condition, and it is by no means so uncommon as perhaps most of us imagine. Spiritually then, we can only live, and keep stagnation, decay, degeneration and death at bay, by continuous warfare upon the "sin that doth so easily beset us." The Apostle uses the singular, and thus goes to the root of the matter. Our lives for good or evil are influenced by one predominating characteristic. He says, "the sin," not the "sins." Grapple with and control this ruling weakness, and take care of it and your minor and resultant failings will take care of themselves. Now it may safely be assumed that the great majority of people of mature age have made the acquaintance of their besetting sin. There is an old saying that at forty, "every man is either a fool or a physician." He has found out and learned to provide against his physical weaknesses, if he is a wise man, and anything else but a "fool." How is it with our moral weaknesses. How many of us are "fools," and how many "physicians." How many are simply letting things slide, bowing to what they call the inevitable and enduring, and in many cases it is to be feared quite contentedly enduring "what cannot be cured." Against this most pernicious error Lent vigorously protests. It breaks in upon our lives with the reminder that spiritual life is only possible for those who persistently strive and fight, that the moment we begin to make terms

with our failings we begin to go back and are on the high road to spiritual death. Our failings are the grand touchstone of character. As we handle them, or as they handle us, so shall we be judged. To live is to fight and strive and struggle, to keep pushing against opposing forces, to resist pressure by counter pressure, which is the only way a living creature can hold his own. To die on the other hand is to try to hold one's own by passive resistance, which is an absurd contradiction in terms. This is the central truth of the Lenten Season, from which all its minor teachings derive their force and point. We hold our own, overcome and finally conquer only by attacking. Spiritual life is perpetual motion.

HAS THE REVERENCE FOR TRUTH DECLINED.

We often hear the fact, or what is assumed to be a fact lamented that men nowadays lack the stern sense of duty possessed by their forefathers. Their unswerving fidelity to principle is often contrasted very unfavorably with what obtains, in what has been called this "flabby age." These men, no doubt, had their failings, we are told, and their obvious limitations, but they were characterized by a high-souled, unselfish devotion to duty, they were willing to suffer for their principles. And then the men of the present day are unfavorably contrasted with them. We may be more tolerant than the men of old times, but we are incomparably less in earnest. As we heard it expressed the other day, "People nowadays hold their principles in their finger and thumb, the men of those days gripped them in their fists," Said someone else speaking on the same subject, "To-day we have opinions, two or three hundred years ago people had convictions." Now, superficially, this seems indisputable, and perhaps in a sense it is true. Men made more noise about their principles, and were more ready to do battle and suffer for them than they are to-day. But is it not rather because the ground has shifted, than from any fundamental change. Does human nature, as a matter of fact, ever fundamentally change. Men appear to be less in earnest about those things they so fiercely contested for in by-gone days, and undoubtedly they are. But why? Is it necessarily because they have lost their reverence for the right, and their loyalty to truth? Or is it because the issues have changed. And was all this burning zeal for the upholding and enforcement of certain matters of principle always the outcome of a purely disinterested love of the truth. Did no self-will ever mingle with it? On the other hand is the tolerance of the age, and the increasing disinclination for controversy, regarding certain matters, an infallible sign of moral degeneration. Is it always an indication of a growing indifference to truth? Might it not be argued that it is just exactly the opposite, that men in their reverence for the truth have become shy of taking sides, and desire to be sure of their ground before committing themselves, that recognizing how necessarily contracted and defective all personal view points must be, they have become disinclined to intolerance. In other words it may be urged, that the apparent indifference of the present day, is not as to truth, but as to certain issues which mankind has discovered are of only secondary importance, and are not vital, and are, therefore, not worth fighting about. On the whole, we think this latter position well taken. Disinterested fidelity to principle is, of course, always admirable. And apparently there were a vast number of men ready to suffer for their conceptions of the right in those days. But was this firmness, we ask again, always disinterested and unselfish? In the vulgar sense, no doubt, it was. It involved bodily suffering, loss of goods, and oftentimes death itself. But their

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