

after; but how gladly I would forget all that to be told of a single soul I have been instrumental in saving! The eminent preacher entered into his rest. There was a great funeral. Many pressed around the grave who had oftentimes hung entranced upon his lips. My friend was there, and by his side was a stranger, who was so deeply moved that when all was over my friend said to him, 'You knew him, I suppose?' 'Knew him?' was the reply. 'No; I never spoke to him, but I owe to him my soul!'

LAY MINISTRATIONS IN CHURCH.

Various schemes are put forth from time to time to show how the Church, by carrying them out, would be enabled to reach the masses of the population more effectively than in the past. Proposals are made, for instance, in certain quarters, for Lay Ministrations in Church. Amongst other objections to this scheme is the loss of sacredness and dignity which would inevitably result to the Church from the ministrations of unordained men in her consecrated buildings. But, apart from that very important consideration, it is difficult to see either the practical advantages of such lay ministrations or the necessity for them. It is simply childish vanity for laymen to suppose that any conceivable multiplication of lay ministrations in church or lay preaching in church would fill with devout worshippers churches now half empty, or would convert the indifferent to Christianity. Where the people anxious to attend the services are so numerous that additional services ought to be put on, the offertory must surely be large enough to support one or more additional priests. If the offertory is not large enough, either the teaching has been defective, or the district must be extremely poor. In the former case the remedy is obvious; in the latter, many societies and richer parishes would be ready to help a work so obviously progressive. But how many instances are there in London of a church attended by such crowds that the clergy are physically incapable of ministering to them? It is all the other way; it is outside the sacred building that the erring or indifferent are so numerous as to render the parochial clergy wholly unable to gain the ear of the vast majority of them. Again, if a new form of service in addition to, or in place of, our venerable morning and evening prayer, be deemed necessary in order to meet the special wants of a particular district, surely the ordained ministers of God are the proper people to conduct it, and would, as a rule, be ready, competent, and desirous to do so. Why should an easily understood and popular service under such circumstances, be entrusted to laymen; while the clergy are relegated to services, on the hypothesis, too antiquated and difficult for parishioners?

But there is one mode of 'reclaiming the lapsed masses' as to which we hear far too little—perhaps, because it is too self-denying, unobtrusive, and laborious for noisy reformers. It is, however, a mode to which the clergy are solemnly pledged, by their ordination vow, 'to use both public and private monitions and exhortations as well to the sick as to the whole, within their cures, as need shall require and occasion shall be given.' Never was the need for steady parochial visitation from house to house greater than now, and the occasions given are simply innumerable. And such visitation is more certain to be effective than any of the fussy organizations proposed. Nor is there any need to waste time over interminable discussions before beginning. Let the parochial clergyman provide himself with a nicely printed card containing the names and addresses of the clergy, and a few simple facts about the existing parochial organizations, and let him set to work with this official visiting-card, and with prayer, and see what comes of

it. In such parochial visitation an earnest layman would find, under the direction of the clergy, an inexhaustible field for his energies and his spiritual tact, and that, too, without any attempt to trespass in the sanctuary. It is a work which must be fruitful, and which is a sure test of earnestness. Those laymen whose zeal for the Church is a thinly veiled desire for self glorification in a surplice would not enter upon, or would soon abandon, a task so laborious. Those who are really in earnest would rejoice in having found a field upon which immediately to enter without any further debate; and such work, combined with a wise and loyal use of the Mission Room, ought fully to satisfy men who have chosen, or who have been called, to serve God in those spheres outside the sanctuary, and in the parish from which the worldliness of the age would fain banish God altogether.

There is another consideration which cannot be passed over in connection with the proposal for lay ministrations in church. Large numbers of the clergy would, the writer believes, neither allow them in their churches, nor take part in any service in church of which lay ministrations should form a part. Another cause of dissension inside the church would be originated by them. The fact is, that the really hard and laborious part of a clergyman's life lies outside the sacred building. The work that he does in a surplice is often, by comparison, light and refreshing. It is often almost the only recreation of a hardworking man. The clergy do not see why they should be inundated with offers of so-called 'help' where it is least required, and should be left practically unaided in the really heavy part of their duties.—*R. R. B. in Church Bells.*

THE CHURCH.

[Ascension Church Life.]

Ours is "The Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." She is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. Our Church was founded by Jesus Christ and His Apostles, A.D. 33, at Jerusalem. She is One; because Jesus founded one, and not many Churches "I am the vine, ye are the branches." The Church is Christ's Body, and all the various parishes or congregations (like our own Ascension Church here in Stillwater) throughout the world are branches, small or large, of the great Vine. She is Holy; because Christ is in, and with His Church, His holy Spirit being the power and the life of the Church, and all Her teachings and work are holy. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

She is catholic, because she is Universal, extends over the entire world, in fulfillment of the command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," and teaches that truth which is universally accepted. She is Apostolic; because She has always maintained Apostolic orders and been the zealous and jealous guardian of "the Faith once delivered to the Saints."

Ours is the true

PROTESTANT Church for she protests against all error. She is the true

EPISCOPAL Church for she has always maintained the holy office and dignity of the order of Bishops—Episcopoi—in the Church. She is the true

PRESBYTERIAN Church, for she has always maintained the order of Priests—Presbyteroi—an recognized the sole authority of each in the spiritual affairs of his Parish. She is the true

CONGREGATIONAL Church, for she declares the right of the whole congregation to all her sacred privileges, and to each congregation the right to administer to its own temporal affairs. She is the true

BAPTIST Church, for she distinctly declares Baptism to be a Sacrament for the benefit of all, infants as well as adults; that it is a means of Grace, and that there is no other known way of becoming a Christian; and the form is by pouring or immersion, as the candidate may desire. She is the true

METHODIST Church, for all her services are methodically pre-arranged by which the chief events of the Saviour's life are kept ever before the people, and the doctrines of Christ systematically taught; everything in Her work and worship being done decently and in order. She is the true

UNIVERSALIST Church, for She asserts the universality of the one catholic and apostolic church of Christ; denying man's power or right to constitute churches upon opposing interpretation of scripture; declaring that Christ died for all, and all will be, or are saved who accept Christ's offer of Salvation. The Church is not Arminian, Calvinist or Wesleyan, for in obedience to Her Sacred head, the Lord Jesus Christ, She "calls no man Master," but Jesus who was "crucified for Her" and in whose name all Her members are baptised.

This is the church—the Bride of Christ—and She lovingly, pleadingly invites you to come in and be saved. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved." The priest or minister is the duly constituted and commissioned Messenger of Christ to carry the Gospel to all His creatures, and administer the Sacraments of the Church—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The Church is extending its borders to-day, and gathering in the wanderers from God faster than any other religious body. Without one word of criticism, and with feelings of charity for all, I call attention to the following summary of report for the year 1888, in the United States:—

Dioceses 68, Bishops 69, Ministers 3,766 Parishes and Missions 5,053, Ordinations (Deacons 116, Priests 103) 218, Baptisms 56,709; Confirmations 39,590, Communicants 450,042, Baptized Members 1,800,163, Sunday School Teachers 39,601, Sunday school scholars 342,431, Contributions \$11,433,597 48.

To understand the great growth of the Church, note this table, from the *New York Evening Post*, for the city of New York only.

Number of Communicants at the date mentioned:—

Religious Bodies.	1882.	1887.	Gain in 5 Years.
Episcopal.....	25 733	33 903	8,170
Presbyterian.....	21 520	23 016	1,306
Methodist.....	12 856	12 981	25
Baptist.....	13 027	13 687	660
Congregational....	2 440	2 315	loss 125

These figures are but a fair illustration of The Church's growth all over our country. How all ought to take courage and help swell the army of God; build up the Kingdom.

We often hear people remark that the Episcopal Church is one of the "Smaller Sects;" we have already shown that she is not a sect, and if she were, statistics show abundantly that she is not a "Smaller" one. The English speaking religious communities of the world stand as follows: Episcopal 21,450,000, Methodist, all kinds, 16,100,000, Roman Catholics 14,750,000, Presbyterians, all kinds, 10,700,000, Baptists, all kinds, 8,210,000, Congregationalists 5,650,000.

The names of the founders and date of organization of the above Protestant Societies are as follows, in the order of their inception:

Presbyterian, by John Knox, A.D. 1520-60; Congregationalist, by Robert Brown, A.D. 1583; Baptist, by Roger William, A.D. 1639; Methodist, by John Wesley, A.D. 1784.

These figures and facts are given not for the purpose of criticising our brothers of these societies—for under God's providence they have all done a great good, which otherwise would not have been done, "for he that is not against