

as narrowly as he may, still as season follows season in glorious succession, the Church will lead them in the foot-step of the Master from the lowly manger at Bethlehem to the Very Right Hand of the Majesty in the heavens.

The purpose of these brief notes will have been fully answered should any be led by them to prize more highly that admirable arrangement of the revolving cycles of time which the sacred poetry of Keble has immortalized under the familiar name of "The Christian Year."

First then in order comes the Season of Advent. Blunt, in his "Annotated Book of Common Prayer," to which we are much indebted for historical information, says that "under its present name the Season of Advent is not to be traced further back than the 7th century; but Collects, Epistles and Gospels for five Sundays before the Nativity of our Lord, and for the Wednesdays and Fridays also, are to be found in the ancient Sacramentaries, and in the Comes of St. Jerome."

These offer good evidence that the observance of the Season was introduced into the Church at the same time with the observance of Christmas: yet there is not, properly speaking, any season of Advent in the Easter Church, which has always preserved ancient customs intact though it observes a Lent before Christmas as well as before Easter.

At the Reformation the Church of England discontinued the special Epistles and Gospels, which until then had been in use for the Wednesday and Fridays in Advent; but it is her manifest desire that the sacred season should be kept by her faithful children in a spirit of lowly waiting for the return of their absent Lord, and of devout contemplation of that time in the earthly long ago when He "came to visit us in great humility." Now she would have us listen with awe to the warbling cry of this voice in the wilderness—"Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" now to the heart-thrilling song of the angels—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men."

Again would she lead us to Bethlehem's humble cradle to worship with adoring wonder the infant Son of God; or with uplifted hand would point us to the clouds of heaven, soon as a mighty chariot to bear back to his watching children in power and great glory the once crucified but now triumphant Redeemer.

A note in our Prayer-book reads—"Advent Sunday is always the nearest Sunday to the Feast of St. Andrew, whether before or after." The observance of St. Andrew's Day is fixed for November 30th: this year, therefore, Advent Sunday falls on November 27th, the earliest day on which it is possible for it to occur, as December 3rd is the latest. "It seems probable that the Western Churches of Europe originally kept six Advent Sundays, as the Eastern still keeps a forty days' fast, beginning on the same day. But the English Church since the Conquest, at least, has observed four only, although the title of the Sunday preceding the first (the Sunday next before Advent) seems to offer an indication of a fifth in more ancient days."—BLUNT.

The date at which the Collects for the first and second Sundays in Advent were composed is 1549. That for the third Sunday was composed by Bishop Cosin in 1611. The Collect for the fourth Sunday is a lengthened translation from that in the Sarum Missal. For grandeur of thought, as for beauty and dignity of expression, these four inspiring petitions are fit introductions to that system of Collects which gathers up within itself in such a comprehensive grasp the sacred lessons of every Sunday and holy-day throughout the year.

SERMON,

By the REV. CANON PARTRIDGE, B. D., at the Annual Service of the Church of England Institute at St. Luke's Cathedral, Thursday Evening, February 9th, 1882.

"From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."—Eph., iv., 16.

(Concluded.)

I am asked to come here and speak on the anniversary of your Church of England Institute. I am but as yet a stranger among you, and know but little of your affairs. But I can test the usefulness of your Institute by one question, What is it doing for the Master's cause? If it flourishes, it is because it is working—because it has *zeal*—because it *must* work. Your Institute must not be gauged by its mere power of amusing and whiling away an idle hour, it must have a stronger motive than that. There are a number of men banded together, a good quantity of bone and muscle and energy and life. Is it making its mark on this place? If it flags, it is because it is not justifying its existence. Let it lay firm hold on some distinct form of Church work, grasp and grapple with some real difficulty, and pursue to successful completion, that will bring the red life-blood surging through its arteries, and brace up its heart-beats.

And the same test will apply to all Church work. What is Halifax doing for the Master's work? Is it actuated by the same burning zeal that boils over all bounds, and will not, cannot be withheld from bravely and boldly rushing forward, thoroughly furnished unto every good work? We of this grand old time worn, weatherbeaten Church of England have much to be thankful for, much to prize; we have inherited a glorious history, we

have an unchangeable faith deposited with us, of which the Church must be the unyielding guardian. We have an apostolical ministry descended unbroken from the birthday of the Church at Pentecost, which no plausible sophistry must ever tempt in to undervalue or give up. We have a rich heritage of heroic lives and martyr deaths, shining on our work of to-day with a lustre that lapse of time has scarcely dimmed; but it is not because of these that the Church still labours and prays and agonizes over a world that will not hear. It is because the drops of the bloody sweat are still falling on the sward of Gethsemane, because the wilful eye still pleads from the blessed cross, because the tones of this glorious voice still re-echo across the centuries. "Lo I am with you always," because there still live and perish, the myriad souls for which Christ died. The Church's mission is the salvation of the world!

It remains to devote a few brief moments more to the second of the ideas presented by the Text. "Fitly joined together and compacted in love," this means a *perfect organization*. The Church of England to-day has much zeal, not a hundredth part of what she ought to have, but still some. But she lacks in organization. There is a lack of sympathy between rich and poor, a want of the "effectual working in the measure of every part," an absence of working organizations which not only bind together pastors and people, but draws out the special gifts for work of every member of the Church. A great change must come over the Church in this respect before she can take her rightful place and do the work which now others are doing for her. Her sole aim must be the *glory of God*, her bond of union, the love of Christ; her pressing, overpowering work, the winning of souls;—her mark of Catholicity to be known and read of all men, steadfastness in the Faith. And in the Parish peace and unity flowing from a generous emulation between pastor and people in the work of the Master, an abounding love for Christ shewn in attention and sympathy for the sick and suffering among His children, and a firm and holy resolution to shew forth the fruits of a pure and scriptural Faith in earnest and self-denying lives. Ah, brethren, this is a noble ideal. It stirs our blood and sends a generous impulse through us, for we recognize this as the battle cry of a true soldier of Jesus Christ.

But to carry this out, the Body of Christ must be "compacted by that which every joint supplieth." That is the idea. Organized work. Work for the pastor in the house of God, by the sick and dying bed, and in superintending and directing the whole. Work for the Sunday School teachers in training the young for Christ. Work for the Bible Class in elucidating the truths of holy writ, and arousing interest in the stupendous themes that treat of Life Eternal. Work for the sick visitor and sympathizing friend, often unnoticed of men, but known of God. Work for the aged saint in pointing out the mercies of God, and drawing others to Him by the power of a winning conversation. Work for the active man of business who can give of his means and influence and leisure, a recreation that will richly repay him. Work for the child, who can, God helping, often lead a parent to the foot of the Cross. Work for the busy matron, lending a few hours to the Lord from the duties of domestic toil. Work for those who, not being blessed with much of this world's goods, may yet join in prayer and in personal service. Yes, for all these there is room, and there must be found employment. Thus and thus only can the concluding words of the Text be accomplished. For what do your pastors labour and pray, for what the heads of families give of their time and means, for what do self-denying women give of their leisure, for what do the silvery tones of the church-bell call us as often as possible to glad service in the house of God? For what do anthem and hymn, joyous song and solemn prayer rise from humbly thankful hearts and voices, and strains of importunate supplications enter into the ears of the Lord God of Hosts? Is it not that we all as members one of another, as "fellow-citizens," &c., may make increase of the Body unto the building up of itself in love? Is it not that we all, even as here on earth we join in working for the Master's cause and evangelizing the world, may hereafter be recognized in the Jerusalem above as there one family in Him, who shall sing the new song of Moses and of the Lamb?

Ye dear friends, let this be our aim. Let these motives and aspirations sanctify our work, and it shall be noted of our Lord, and return upon us here in "showers of blessing," and call forth at the final trial the blissful commendation. "I know thy works." To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne."

Correspondence.

The columns of THE CHURCH GUARDIAN will be freely open to all who may wish to use them, no matter what the writer's views or opinions may be; but objectionable personal language, or doctrines contrary to the well understood teaching of the Church, will not be admitted.

REUNION.

(To the Editors of the Church Guardian.)

SIRS.—From an English paper I clip the following:—

"UNITED STATES.—Another mark of Churchward tendency among the orthodox denominations

is the proposal of leading Presbyterians to change the observance of the 'Week of Prayer' from the first week in January to the first week of Lent. The Week of Prayer was originally designed by the Evangelical Alliance as a week of prayer for Missions; but of late years it has taken a general devotional character, looking also to the revival of religion at home."

Would that something like this could be accomplished, and all Christendom, of every name, be on its knees at once for seven days! What blessings would follow! I would only ask would not the *last* week in Lent be better? and could it not be this year?

A Mr. W. T. Lynn writes to the London Standard: "The old idea that our Lord's passion and resurrection occurred in A. D. 35 (given in most Bibles which have dates in the margins) was founded on the traditional belief that He was about thirty-three years on earth, combined with the idea that the date as His nativity was four years later than it really was (the actual date of that event being, in all probability, B. C. 4). The only real doubt about the date of the resurrection is whether it was A. D. 29 or 30. Now, astronomy tells us that the full moon, which would be Paschal in the former year, fell on a Saturday (April 16), which is inconsistent with the circumstances narrated. But in A. D. 30 that full moon was on Thursday, April 6, on which day the Passover meal was eaten, and our Lord suffered the next day (in our reckoning, the same day in the Jewish) on which other observances connected with the Passover were still to be kept. This, then, I have very little doubt, was the true year; and, if so, of course the Easter was on April 9, on which day we shall this year celebrate its anniversary."

I cut this second extract from the *Pictou Standard*. If the calculations of Mr. Lynn be correct, we should all be keeping the real anniversary of the Passion of our Blessed Master.

D. C. MOORE.

THE REVISED VERSION.

(To the Editors of the Church Guardian.)

SIRS.—There is one sentence in Mr. Gelling's paper on the Revised Version of the New Testament with which I am able to agree, viz., that "on this all-important subject we must be guided by the writings of those persons who have the knowledge to enquire into these subjects, and who have the leisure and ability to search the MSS. and the Fathers." But we immediately part company, for, while it seems to me that the logical application of the principle thus asserted would require us, in the first place, to receive with respect and deference a work on which some of the most able and distinguished scholars of the nation had been engaged for a period of ten years, and when this work was subjected to severe and hostile criticism, to wait and hear the replies which might be made thereto before forming a final judgment. Mr. Gelling, on the other hand, in a paper avowedly written for those readers of the CHURCH GUARDIAN who are wholly dependent on its pages for information respecting the subject, on the authority of a single reviewer, most positively, unhesitatingly, and sweepingly condemns the Revised Version as a translation of a "Greek Testament vastly more remote from what the Evangelists (and Apostles) actually wrote than any which has appeared since the invention of printing"; and in every case of disputed reading speaks of that which the reviewer prefers as beyond all question the words of the inspired writer.

Dean Burgon, the reviewer in question, has continued his attack in the January number of the "Quarterly" in the matter of translation; but in the article from which Mr. G. has drawn his inspiration and his material, the fundamental question is the relative value, authority, and importance of the earlier and fewer and the later and more numerous Greek MSS. of the New Testament, and whether the revisers have sufficiently taken into consideration the ancient versions and the citations in the earlier Fathers. Almost simultaneously with the publication of the Revised Version there came from the press a new Greek Testament, edited by Professors Westcott and Hort, who had projected the work as long ago as 1853, and though often interrupted by pressing duties, had never been wholly diverted from it. The text of this Greek Testament is based chiefly on the two most ancient MSS., the Vatican (B.) and the Sinaitic (Aleph.); and Dr. Burgon, in his wholesale condemnation of the changes made by the revisers, explains them by the fact that they have been misled throughout "by the unsatisfactory decrees and eager advocacy" of the two Cambridge Divinity Professors. A copy of the text of this Greek Testament was placed by the editors by the side of each reviser, and its influence has undoubtedly been very great. But it is only fair to hear what the revisers themselves say concerning the revision of the text. In the preface we are assured that "different schools of criticism were represented, and together constituted to the final result." And Archdeacon Palmer more fully says: "From the first verse of St. Matthew to the last verse of the Revelation the revisers passed under review every variant which had a fair shew of authority and seemed to have any possible bearing on the translation, and determined, according to the best of their power, on which side lay the preponderance of evidence. . . . It was thought better to correct the Greek text in points

where the correction might seem unimportant than to run a risk of leaving it uncorrected where correction might be, or even seem to be, of importance. It will be observed, again, that the readings adopted by the revisers are not always those adopted by Lachmann, or by Tischendorf, or by Tregelles, or even by Westcott and Hort, although Westcott and Hort were themselves revisers, and by their kindness each of their colleagues had their text beside him in proof throughout the work. There were among us textual critics of different schools, whose names are well known to the learned world. When they agreed, those of us who had not made textual criticism our special study followed their consentient voice; when they differed, we deemed it our duty to ask for a statement of the evidence and to decide between them. It was our desire not to follow blindly the lead of one or more individual editors, but to amend the text so long 'received' wherever, and only where, there was a distinct preponderance of evidence in favour of such amendment." And Bishop Ellicott: "In the more difficult passages we have ever given especial heed to the great early versions, and to the voice, wherever it could be heard in the same language as that which we were translating, of primitive and patristic antiquity."

As we are reminded in the preface to the Revised Version, "textual criticism, as applied to the Greek New Testament, forms a special study of much intricacy and difficulty, and even now leaves room for considerable variety of opinion among competent critics"; and it is, of course, possible that the principles of criticism at present more generally followed may prove to be unsound. But while such articles as that of the Dean of Chichester have, notwithstanding their excessive dogmatism and importance, much value in leading to a re-examination of the subject from every point of view, we may be pardoned, perhaps, if we are loth to accept his opinions as conclusive and infallible. He has been described by one of his critics, Dr. Sanday, as possessing every qualification for his work but one. "The one thing which he lacks is a grasp on the central condition of the problem and a real understanding of his opponent's position." And his critic further says that he "seems to have tried hard to reduce his own theory to an absurdity; but it would have been far better to throw over external evidence (and internal evidence as it presents itself to ordinary minds) altogether, and stand upon his own *ipse dixit* as to what the Evangelist must have written." This is pretty severe, but how far true I know not. But, accepting Mr. Gelling's principle that we should "be guided by the writings of those persons who have the knowledge to enquire into these subjects, and who have the leisure and ability to search the MSS. and the Fathers," and being constrained in any given case to choose between the revisers and Dr. Burgon, with no light or guidance from other sources, I should at once submit myself to the former.

Without any special knowledge of textual criticism, the principle will, I think, commend itself to most that the nearer the source the purer the waters will be, and that we should look for a purer text in the older than in the later MSS. The charge that they exercise a "tyrannical ascendancy over the imagination of critics" simply means that the person who chooses thus to express himself is not disposed to allow to them that authority which is conceded by others. An attempt is made to weaken their authority by suggesting that "the very reason why they escaped, while many others perished, was that the writers made so many mistakes that these copies were useless." Well, I hope Mr. G. will pardon me if I confess myself unable to understand the constitution and workings of a mind which can be influenced by such an argument. We are told again that they differ among themselves and from the great body of the other MSS., and from the writings of the Fathers also. As to the extent of their differences from each other, all critics do not agree with Dr. Burgon. Thus Alford asserts "the agreement, in the main, of our oldest uncials with the citations of the primitive Fathers and with the earliest versions"; and "the very general concurrence of the character of the text of our earliest MSS., Versions and Fathers with that text which the soundest critical principles lead us to adopt." Of the later MSS. some, it is true, may be "transcripts of texts of at least as much value as those of our most ancient MSS., and in some few cases it has been ascertained that it is so." But many again are probably copies of one MS., and have, consequently, only the authority of that one. Simply to count, therefore, the number of MSS. on each side in a case of disputed reading is no test whatever. I do not ask if 900 MSS. can be brought forward to support a single reading, although it would surprise me greatly if they could, for many of the MSS. never contained more than portions of the New Testament, and others are only fragments. But, without reference to any special instance adduced by Mr. G., I would, by way of caution, commend to careful consideration the following words of Dean Alford: "In this field it is that the strong assertions may be safely made which we so constantly find in the pages of those who would uphold the received text at all hazards; who tell us again and again that 'four or five MSS. only' read this or that, and 'all the rest agree with the received text,' when perhaps these 'four or five' are just the consensus of our most ancient and venerable authorities, and 'all the rest' may, for ought we know, be in many cases no more worthy to be heard in the matter than so many separate printed copies