

we had better no longer call ourselves really Christian; but for consistency's sake profess to be what we are in practice, namely, Christian, so long as our selfish extravagance is not interfered with, but the moment it is, deniers of Christ and His Church.

We have actually forced the Domestic Committee into a position in which they are obliged to write to the Bishops of different dioceses who have depended upon them for aid, that as "prudent men, they cannot at this time increase their obligations by any fresh pledges for the future." Oh, shame that it has come to this! Well has a writer said, "What a commentary upon our Christian character is this! With what sin-polluted garments are we entering upon that solemn Advent season which speaks to us continually as a Lord who will speedily come to reckon with His servants, and to render to every man according to his works!"

The Bishop of one of our New England dioceses, since receiving notice from the Domestic Committee that they could not pledge him at present the stipends for his missionaries, said to me that he knew not what he was to do, or how his missionaries could be sustained; the responsibility thus thrown upon him caused him the greatest anxiety. And now many of our Bishops are to-day labouring under the same burden, not knowing whither they are to turn, or what they are to do, to find means to carry forward their missionary work, which is the work of the Church in this country.

But I believe that the missions of the Church will be sustained. Perhaps it was necessary that the Board of Missions should be thus straitened in their finances, in order to make our people know and feel that they are responsible, *individually* as well as collectively, and not the committee, if the work is not done, and the workmen not supported. Communicants of means, with their good incomes sufficient for all the demands of comfort, and a plenty to lay by for the future, doling out their pennies for missions, pledging their twenty-five cents a quarter, as I have known one lady communicant of wealth to do, while a poor washer-woman, with an invalid husband and a family of children to support, pledged fifty cents a quarter for the same object—why, it is enough to make the heart sick to think of such faithlessness to trusts which God has given us, such utter shuffling of responsibilities, such betrayal of interests the most sacred and Divine. The man or woman that is a Christian has something to do in these days besides eating and sleeping and looking pretty; something to do even besides going to church on Sunday morning, in the full consciousness of making a fine display of the latest fashions, and striking envy into the hearts of the miserable sinners that occupy the free pews.

Yes, thank God, we have the noblest work to do; we have a Cross to bear; the standard of Christ and His Church to set up in the towns and hamlets of this mighty nation; the souls of lost men to seek and to save by bringing them to Christ through the door of His Church. The whole land is thrown open to this Church of the Apostles; everywhere, from the East to the West, people are ready, as they were never ready before, for her to become their teacher in things spiritual. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." The Advent call is yet ringing in our ears. The coming of the Lord draweth near. It is ours to hasten his coming by doing our full duty to make ready a people prepared to meet Him.—*The Chureman.*

Family Reading.

THE LITTLE BOY THAT DIED.

The following touching and beautiful poem, written on the occasion of the death of a young son greatly loved, cannot fail to find a place in the heart of every bereaved parent:—

I am alone in my chamber now,
And the midnight hour is near,
And the fagots crack, and the clock's dull tick,
Are the only sounds I hear;
And over my soul in its solitude,
Sweet feelings of sadness glide,

For my heart and my eyes are full when I think
Of the little boy that died.

I went one night to my father's house—
Went home to the dear ones all—
And softly I opened the garden gate,
And softly the door to the hall,
My mother came out to meet her son,
She kissed me and then she sighed,
And her head fell upon my neck, as she wept
For the little boy that died.

I shall miss him when the flowers come,
In the garden where he played;
I shall miss him more by the fireside,
When the flowers have decayed.
I shall see his toys, and his empty chair,
And the horse he used to ride;
And they will speak with a silent speech,
Of the little boy that died.

We shall go home to our Father's house—
To our Father's house in the skies,
Where the hope of our souls shall have no blight,
Nor love no broken ties.
We shall roam on the banks of the river of peace,
And bathe in its blissful tide,
And one of the joys of heaven shall be
The little boy that died.

OUR NEW VICAR.

BY THE REV. J. S. B. MONSELL, LL.D.

II.

REPLY.

I am rejoiced that anything, even a trouble, has re-opened our correspondence, closed for too many years. And with all my heart I throw myself into your position and its difficulties, and, so far as my experience of clerical life—now a pretty long one—may make me a safe adviser, I am yours as counsellor and guide. God direct us both aright in this and every matter—but specially in this, for it is one of great moment, and demands the utmost caution and forbearance.

The Church of England is, as it appears to me, in a wonderful transition state; passing onward and upward, as I believe, at every step. I know there are heads, wiser than mine, which look upon her in these times with feelings of despondency, but I must confess that all my feelings are those of thankfulness and hope. She has in my own memory made such strides, has struck her roots so deeply into the soil of men's hearts, and spread out so widely her branches over their heads, that I have no doubt of her vigour and healthfulness. I do not mean to say that there are no causes of anxiety in connection with her. On two extreme sides there exist two extreme influences which are dangerous. Some think her incapable of improvement in the way in which all her true lovers would desire to see her improved, namely, by the greater elevation of her people to that standard of doctrine and practice which our fathers secured and uplifted in our Book of Common Prayer at the Reformation, and below which, during long years of carelessness and deadness, she has sunk. I dread them much. Others think they can improve her order and service, and make her a better and more Catholic Church than our fathers left her at the Reformation. I dread them more.

With the latter, however, I have nothing now to do. They may, and no doubt will, crop up in the course of our correspondence, and then we can discuss them. It is with the former, and their injurious influences, I have at present to deal.

Your parish seems to me to be just in that position in which, if it has wise guidance and will follow it, great and lasting blessings are upon its threshold for acceptance. But if on the other hand, it take a mad wild fit, and will fly from what it fears, rather than watch and pray for what it needs, it is certain to make mischief for itself and others, and to delay its own reformation for an indefinite period. I am therefore most thankful that it has in you a moderator so kind and wise, and trust that, through God's blessing on your influence, all will go well.

You ask me two questions—first, about the man himself, of whom you hear that he is likely

to be your Vicar; and next, about an appeal to be made to the Bishop against his probable appointment.

First, then, about the man. I know him well—and, if ever any parish had a blessing in a pastor, yours may have that blessing, if it be fortunate enough to receive him. I say, "may have that blessing," because, though he is the very being formed to be a blessing to his people, still, if they will not receive him cordially, they may never know the sweetness of those good things he has to give.

He is, in the first place, a very holy man. This is, in my mind, the chief essential of a good clergyman. No ability, no education, no system, no energy can do without this. Even the sacred powers which his orders confer are enhanced in value by the personal holiness of him who holds them. Every rite is celebrated with more faith, every word spoken with more unction, every act done with more reverence. Men glorify God in him. And therefore, whenever I am looking for a curate, the one question I always put first is this—Is he a pious man? If not, I'll have none of him. But if he be indeed a true lover of Christ and souls, then I feel sure he must be valuable, and even though we may not at first in all things exactly agree in our dogmatic teaching, still I doubt not but that time, and God's grace, and the fellowship of God's work, will make us both one;—I getting perhaps from him, in the little friction which precedes such unity, as much benefit and blessing as I, though the elder, and no doubt in my own opinion the wiser, could on him bestow.

Your expected Vicar is a holy man, and he is moreover a wise and experienced man. He is no novice in practical theology. He has devoted all the powers of a singularly fine mind, and all the energies of very warm affections, to his sacred work, and I know no clergyman—if I may use the expression—more accomplished. I have often met him in assemblies of his brethren, where the weightiest matters have been discussed. His voice, when raised, charmed all into silent attention; and though, of course, all did not yield to his opinions, yet all acknowledged their wisdom and worth, and many a weighty word was borne away, as it dropped from his lips, to be food for after meditation. In addition to all this, he is a man of great tact and kindness. Some very good men, wanting these qualifications, knock their heads against every corner. He will be found as careful of others' feelings as he would be of their reputation. Quite aware of the existence of strong prejudices, and of the need to deal with them gently, it will never content him to have his own way even in a good matter, unless he can get those, with whom he would have it, to be themselves consenting parties. The brute force which sweeps away a difficulty, is not his: rather that persuasion which feels that it gains nothing, unless it gain over the opposer to be a willing instrument in his hands. It is in men and by men, not against men and over men, that he loves to prevail.

Now surely all this should be good news to you. One objection, however, I anticipate—and not an unnatural one—namely, all these fine qualities only make him a more dangerous man, if those principles which he holds, and those practices which he would establish, be not sound and good. Granted. To that, therefore, I address myself.

Compare the Church now with what it was twenty-five years ago. How much more clear in her doctrine, fervent in her faith, glowing in her zeal, earnest and devoted in her action! She was almost dead, and is alive again. She was lost, and is found. Those who honestly live in, and love the Reformed Church of England, seek to make her people what their Prayer-book teaches them they should be.

I know well the faithful English heart of the pastor your fortunate parish is about to have,—that it rejoices in his Church as *she is*, and considers it the duty of his life to teach her children how truly, fully, simply she can lead their souls to Christ. One yearning after aught beyond her pale never disturbed him. He has no Romanizing tendencies, and never had. And you will find, the longer you know him, that, though his teaching may not, and will not, be of that aggressive character which some deem so essential an element of orthodoxy, its sound infusion of positive truth