

time embraced what is now South Simcoe and a portion of North Simcoe. He was rural dean of the district for many years, and canon of the Cathedral of Niagara Diocese. In 1857 he was appointed rector of Ancaster and Dundas, and laboured there till failing strength forced him to retire in 1882.

Canon Osler leaves a widow and six sons and two daughters. There are no more distinguished Canadians, so far as native merit confers distinction, than Mr. Osler's sons. They are: Mr. Justice Osler, Mr. B. B. Osler, Q.C., Mr. E. B. Osler; Dr. Wm. Osler, the eminent professor of Johns Hopkins, whose services were recently sought as President of McGill; F. L. Osler, of Qu'Appelle, and Mr. E. Osler, of Winnipeg. Mrs. A. E. Williamson, of this city, the daughter with whom Canon Osler lived, is President of the Women's Auxiliary of the Church of England in Canada. The other is Mrs. H. C. Gwyn, of Dundas. There are 28 grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Canon Osler resident in all parts of the Dominion.

The funeral took place from St. Luke's Church. The service was conducted by the Bishop of Niagara and Ven. Archdeacon Boddy. Many members of the family and a large number of the clergy from Niagara and Toronto dioceses were present.

THE DECLINE OF OUR DOMESTIC MISSIONS.

It is no novelty to hear complaints of the lack of interest in our missions and the want of support, nay, of positive neglect that they suffer from. From several dioceses we hear that the mission funds this year show a decided decrease. "Hard times" are, to some extent, to blame, but only to some extent. It will not do to cover the matter up with that reply. The cause of trouble lies much deeper, and the fact that while money is forthcoming for chimerical schemes, these mission deficits increase, shows that when savings are to be made, they are singled out as the first to suffer. Of the many reasons that might be mentioned, among the gravest is the want of preparation of our newly ordained men. We had a story the other day of the African missionary who was unable to accompany his Bishop, because he had not been taught in the seminary the subjects essential for the discharge of his duties. There are other things besides swimming absolutely necessary for a back-woods mission—conduct and management of the events of every-day life which are not taught in our seminaries, probably because the teachers have never acquired the knowledge by practical experience themselves. On the other hand, many newly ordained men go to the country suffering from doctrinal measles (there are two forms of this disease, high and low), and unfortunately time and experience are required to overcome it. Alas, the disease often does greater harm to the mission than to the missionaries, for it has run its course and they find their level. Another is the result of diverse training, directed, as it too often is, to create disunion, foment bigotry, and drive half of the congregation away. This is stimulated by the appropriation of funds, and giving aid and comfort to one set, instead of to the whole Church. These people seem to think of the ministers only and forget the sheep—and he to thank only those who agree with him. Another is the frequent change among the mission clergy. If a man makes mistakes, he is moved to another sphere; sometimes he learns and improves—if he does, and his mission thrives, it is too often made the stepping-stone to another sphere

(possibly in the U.S.), but if he does not—the result is two or three failures and the permanent saddling of inferior men upon our parishes, to the infinite harm of the Church as a whole. Our Bishops and preachers seldom realize that the country missions and smaller country towns need their presence and sympathy more than the large and fully organized city parishes, and something more than a few hours hasty sojourn. Yet on almost all the greater festivals the Bishops and preachers are found in the cities. For these, among other reasons, our Diocesan Mission Funds show deficiencies, but if our clergy strove more to devote themselves to their parishes, and set Domestic Missions before their congregations, both publicly and privately, as a desirable investment on behalf of the Church—and if they would make themselves more and more one with their flocks—we would never hear that word "deficiency" again in our Diocesan Synods.

FASTING.

The question of the duty and advantage of fasting is something which all Christian people should seriously consider at this period of the Church's year. The time is past when fasting can be looked upon from a superstitious point of view as something which is to be considered as of itself meritorious. The idea of fasting as a work of supererogation, by which the faster lays up something to his account for his own or others' good, is an obsolete delusion. Yet fasting is a duty which all must practice. For not only the Church, but Scripture, lays upon the followers of Christ the obligation of this ascetic observance. Asceticism is, according to the Sermon on the Mount, a parallel duty with prayer and almsgiving. The most superficial study of the Christian system will convince any candid person of what it is proper for them to do in this relation. Fasting is a voluntary denial of bodily appetite. It is dictated by the fact that when the body is subdued and repressed the mind and soul are more at liberty. All great intellectual workers have been fasters. Newton went whole days without taking food when he was working out the details of his splendid theory. Macaulay wrote from morning till evening without a mouthful. In Balzac's description of his own method of work, in those delightful letters to his sister, he tells how it was his practice to dine at six, sleep till twelve, midnight, and work the following twelve hours without eating. We cite these examples for a very obvious purpose. If the mind works best without the distraction of eating; if intellectual workers can deny themselves food for the purpose of receiving and recording with greater brilliancy and force the impressions of fancy and imagination, can it be doubted that prayer is more intense, more earnest, more untiring, when it is accompanied with fasting? If for nothing else than this liberty and clearness of mind and spirit, fasting may well be practiced by those who crave some deep spiritual impression or some great and effective potency in their prayers. Common sense and reason suggest that as fasting is an aid to study and intellectual production, so it may be an auxiliary to prayer and religious meditation.

There is another side, also, to this question. The word ascetic means one who practices. The athlete, according to St. Paul, practices outside the arena, in order that he may be able to prevail when his call to the arena comes. St. Paul talks of his body as if it were also his antagonist. He wishes to guide it as his slave, and to crush it with heavy blows when it is rebellious to his

higher will. To fast, is to exert the power of this higher will. It is to train the baser nature by subduing it into slavery to the higher and spiritual nature. It is only by occasional fasting that many men can gain habitual temperance in all things, and it is during Lent that this exercise of fasting may be more properly undertaken. As the athlete hardens his thews and sinews by beating the air in his shadow-fight, so the Christian during Lent may undertake a shadow-fight which will prepare him for successful conflict with those substantial foes who are not of flesh and blood, but whose ranks of darkness he can never overcome, unless he uses every means within his power; and of these means Christ and His Church have placed the practice of fasting among the first.—*The Churchman.*

SELF-DENIAL.

O Lord, Who for our sakes didst fast forty days and forty nights, give us grace to use such abstinence, that our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey Thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness, to Thy honour and glory, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

That our Lord *fasted* before His temptation in the wilderness seems to point out to us the means by which we should prepare to meet temptations; and accordingly this Collect furnishes us with a prayer for self-discipline and self-denial.

We are called *at all times* to deny ourselves so far as this—we must do what we *ought*, not only what we *like*. But during Lent, and on every fast appointed by the Church, it is well and useful to deny ourselves sometimes *lawful* pleasures—things we should like to have or like to do, and which no duty at all forbids us to have or to do. It is well and useful for just the reason mentioned in the Collect—to help us to "subdue the flesh to the Spirit"; to train us to conquer *ourselves*, so that when any duty does stand in the way of pleasure, we may have got the *habit* of self-denial, and so find it easier to do at once what we ought, and turn away from what we like. Those who wish to win a race do not wait, before they try their strength, for the moment when they *must* run it. They train themselves beforehand. And, just so, we had far better not wait to deny ourselves till the moment comes when we *must* do so or do wrong, but train ourselves in self-denial before temptation comes.

REVIEWS.

AT LAST. By Mrs. M. E. Lauder; pp. 310. Toronto: William Briggs.

Discounting the peculiar religious flavour and the rather abundant typographical slips, we have enjoyed the simple story, which has a home-look about it in speaking so familiarly of Toronto and scenes within and around it. The account of the cities and palaces in the old regime of France is very rich and beautiful, just touching lightly where a description would have been out of place. There is scarcely a plot, and all comes out for the best at last; but we slightly doubt the possibility of a stepson coming in as heir to an earldom and all its possessions, as the patent of creation is usually very restrictive in the line of the heirs in tail. But whatever the law may say, the sentiment of our story is fully satisfied, and we hope that Harry forgot his bugbear of snobs and shams. In form and matter the volume provides pleasant reading.

Home & Foreign Church News

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.

NOVA SCOTIA.

FREDERICK COURTNEY, D.D., BISHOP, HALIFAX.

SYDNEY, C.B.—*St. George's*.—A special meeting of Sydney Rural Deanery was called by Rev. E. Ausell, senior priest, on the 14th inst., for the purpose of electing a Rural Dean. Owing, however, to the snow storm, and the death of one of Mr. Ausell's parishioners, only Archdeacon Smith and Rev. W. J.

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