

where they had come from, or whether there were any more. The truth was they did not know. So he was compelled to content himself with what he had secured. He bade the monks adieu and bore the fragments back with him to Europe. But the conviction never left his mind that there must be more where that came from. Nine years after, in 1853, he visited the monastery again. This time he took with him a written request from the Viceroy of Egypt (equivalent to a command) to the Abbot to show to Tischendorf the precious documents. He was courteously received, but was informed that the MSS. could not be found. He believed the monks were lying, but all the same he had to turn home again empty-handed. In 1859 he made a third attempt. This time he was fortified with letters from the Emperor of Russia and the Patriarch of the Eastern Church. Again he was met by the same story. The book was lost! For three months he stayed examining the contents of the library and always hoping to get his hand on the coveted book. He suspected, as was afterwards proved to be the case, that the monks did not know whether the book was there or not, for the reason that they were too ignorant to know it if they saw it. But wearied out at last he gave it up in despair, and ordered his camels and servants to start back next morning toward Europe. He was so cut up by his failure that one of the good brothers—a sort of scholar after his fat witted fashion—asked him to sup with him in his own cell. After supper he pompously took from his closet a volume and handed it to Tischendorf saying, "I, too, am a scholar. I have found a book." Tischendorf took it good-humoredly, and—*lo it was the Book!*

But it was far more than Tischendorf had dreamed of. Beside the Old Testament it contained the whole New Testament! Not a word was wanting. The document was evidently the oldest known to be in existence.

After much persuasion the fraternity were induced to allow it to be carried away as a present to the Emperor Alexander of Russia, their patron and defender of the faith.

And so this volume, in a sense the original title deed of the Church, was brought to Europe, and is lodged to-day in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg.

### THE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER ON VOWS, POVERTY, CELIBACY.

'What is there in vows, abstractedly considered, inconsistent with the precept or doctrine of Holy Scripture, or at variance with the best interests of society, or in opposition to the needs of human nature, or out of harmony with the ordinances of the Church, or foreign to the spiritual history of great saints, whether of Old or New Testament times?

'As a matter of fact, the Bible record is full of vows of all kinds, and instead of deprecating or forbidding them, it recognises, sanctions, and regulates them. Civil society, under the analogous form of oath, insists on them as obligatory for the graver affairs of life. So far from only hurting or maiming human nature, they are again and again found to be a prop and help to its infirmities, because a support against the inevitable reactions of generous emotion. Indeed, if they were found of no value, they would disappear. At Baptism, and Confirmation, and Holy Matrimony, and Ordination, the Church in the most distinct and public manner possible recognises the importance of vows for life, and refuse to admit to her greatest ordinance without them. The great Apostle of the Gentiles, St. Paul himself, did not think it inconsistent, even with his liberty in Christ and his freedom from the yoke of the law, to

make a vow, and to keep it. It was that vow which sent him to bear witness at Rome.

'Here another question occurs. If Christian people really feel that vows help them to great and lasting sacrifices, and that they keep the flame of enthusiasm burning in the heart, what right have we to interfere with their personal liberty, or sternly to tell them that they wish to bring back Romanism? "Promise" is also a liturgical word, and, if not thought feeble, might be an acceptable substitute for "vow." Sorrowfully we admit that in past times vows have been shamefully and scandalously abused. To anticipate and prevent such troubles, the Church will claim her right of dispensation from them. Should a vow, thus dispensable, seem a new thing, both to the Church and to the personal conscience, and presently come to be looked at as something easily to be taken up or laid down, just as the feelings or circumstances of the moment change, like an extra garment for a cold day or a cordial to be taken when required, the difficulty, though real, for a independent and living Church like ours, need not be fatal. It must be faced. Those who remember what St. Augustine thought of vows may be encouraged. He did not live in the middle ages, nor was he a Roman; and most of us quote him when he is on our side.

As to *poverty* and *celibacy* the Bishop says:—

'Our Lord has said, "Whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be My disciple." Does that still hold good? You say yes, and you say well. But in case the Lord whispers to a soul (He often does so whisper), "Live a single life for a while for My sake and the Gospel's," is not such a sacrifice of the highest and most beautiful kind, acceptable to God and lovely with men? Are wife and children and a refined home essential to a life of devotion? Certainly St. Paul did not think so. Are there not circumstances and localities in which a man can do his work more freely and completely without them? Is not it conceivable that there may be plague-spots in all great cities where it would be a base selfishness to take wife and children to breathe the foul air; behold corrupting sights, become familiarised with horrible and loathsome language; yet also the places where it must be a shame for some men not to go, and where for a few of their midsummer years eager and brave youths might be glad to go, for a time, to work for their Master, surrendering much that flesh and heart desire for His Name's sake. We want enthusiasm; then do not gratuitously chill it. You cannot expect enthusiasm without a little eccentricity. Condone the eccentricity for the sake of the enthusiasm; and let good sense have a hearing, touched with the justice and love. What possible harm can there be in a life of celibacy, limited or life-long, if God be more glorified by it? It is a kind of life which multitudes of saintly and devoted men every day prefer and maintain for themselves, taking no greater credit for it. Let us be free, with vows or without them, in striving "by all means to save some" for whom Christ died.

'The Church of England has lost time," writes an eminent professor. It is true, and she must lose no more. Nor must she be either too timid in considering new methods, or too hasty in rejecting old ones. A plan is not necessarily bad because it is new, nor good because it is old, nor to be rejected as impracticable and hopeless, because in past times, as different as possible from our own, unwise men used it unwisely. We must not be too much scared by the ghosts of past mistakes. Prudent Churchmen are not likely to be eager to scare and irritate the public temper by a caricature of an obsolete monasticism. But why is the great Church of England to be forever debarred the right of re-ascertaining and improving methods and practices, which in wise hands might be fraught with countless blessing, merely because, hundreds of years ago, our fathers found

them spoiled and corrupted, and in a just displeasure flung them away.—*Church Bells.*

### CHOIR GUILDS.

(From Church Review, New York.)

One of the best possible means of disseminating the knowledge of Church Music and of inculcating a love for the highest and truest style in Church Music, is the formation of Choir Guilds, either local or Diocesan. These already exist in many cities, but no city should be without one. The annual Choir Festival, of the United Choirs of Trinity Parish, which takes place in New York City, has done a remarkable work in making known a style of Church Music which was very little practised before this Guild—for such it really is—was established. In Brooklyn this same good work is being done by the Long Island Church Guild, which will hold its second annual festival in St. Ann's Church, on November 21. A Choir Guild has existed in New Jersey for a decade, and one in Vermont about the same time. Within two or three years past one has been organized in Chicago, and in Massachusetts a choir festival has been given for a number of years past.

In addition to producing the best compositions of well-known English and American Church musicians, these festivals have also in many instances been productive of valuable new compositions. The Trinity Choir Festival, indeed, has a rule which requires an original composition of each one from the pen of one of the parish organists, and as a result of this rule, several meritorious anthems have been composed by Messrs Henry Carter, Charles E. Horsley, W. B. Gilbert, and G. F. Le Jeune. In Boston, Mr. S. B. Whitney has brought out some new works at the festivals there, which have won favor, and in other places, if nothing else has been done, new hymn tunes have resulted from these gatherings.

To organise the vested choir of a district into a Guild, requires considerable hard work, but this work is fully compensated for by the good results obtained. The rapid and enormous increase in vested choirs is due to many causes, but one of the most potent of these causes is, that such choirs are able to sing the true Cathedral Service of the Church of England, which cannot be sung with good effect by a quartet or volunteer chorus. And the more this style of Service Music is known, the better it is appreciated. If every diocese or large city had its Choir Guild with its annual festival, one result would be that churches which had not vested choirs would soon obtain them, and surely it should be the duty of every one who desiderates a reverent and churchly musical service, to do all in his power to hasten the day when the unchurchly solo quartet will be forever abolished.—*D. E. Hervey in The Church Review.*

He who has learned the secret of a happy life will bow his head before life's storms, but will gladly raise it again to welcome the returning sunlight. Many of the troubles men suffer are imaginary and born of their fears; many of them are trifles unworthy to dwell in their own thoughts; many more might be avoided by care on their own part; and very many contain within them the seeds of good to themselves and benefit to others that could be produced in no other way.

MANY a man would like to begin the Christian life if he could only turn about when nobody was looking. It is the turning over of the leaf when everybody is reading it—it is the right-about-face on the crowded street when everybody will see the act and what it means—that it is which makes it easier to put off till to-morrow the supreme duty which ought to be done to-day.—*Selected.*