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TORONTO, THURSDAY, MAY 29th, 1890.

REV. PROF. WM. CLARK, LL.D. Editor.

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Lessons for Sundays and Holy Days.

June 1.—TRINITY SUNDAY.
Morning.—Isa. 6 to v. 11. Rev. 1 to v. 9.
Evening.—Gen. 18; or 1 & 2 to v. 4. Eph. 4 to v. 17; or Matt. 3.

SIBERIA AND IRELAND.—Mr. Gladstone has done a good many things of late to destroy the trust of those who once put faith in him; but we do not believe that he has ever done anything quite as bad as the writing of a letter and the delivering of a speech in which he has recently compared the doings of the English government in Ireland to the treatment of Russian prisoners in Siberia. It was to be hoped that Mr. Gladstone had got a little ashamed of bidding people "remember Mitchellstown;" since his own relations to the occurrences there were not at all creditable to his veracity. But it appears that he has not got over the blindness of the past; and he dares to tell English people by word of mouth, and by deliberately written words, that they are not in a position to remonstrate with the Russian government, since their own conduct to political offenders is equally bad. To ordinary people it will hardly seem conceivable that such words should be spoken, but unfortunately there is no escape from the conclusion, since we have the same sentiments in two different forms. It would be some relief if we could bring ourselves to believe that Mr. Gladstone did not possess the requisite information respecting Siberian affairs, and more especially the massacre at Yakoutsck. But unfortunately this way of escape is no longer possible. This was his first plea, that we must wait for further information before we express an opinion. Now that he has obtained this information, he makes use of it to slander his own country as implicated in similar outrages. This is an unpardonable insult to the whole English people, and it must not be forgotten. Happily Mr. Kennan has now made us to know the state of things in Siberia, as well almost as we know it in Ontario; and the testimony which he has borne will live in the memory and the conscience of all civilized and christianized men and nations until the wrongs of suffering, martyred Russia shall be righted.

MR. STANLEY.—If Mr. Stanley had any thought

of achieving fame and obtaining admiration and homage by his marvellous travels and explorations, his success must be very much beyond his expectations. Two great meetings in London, "multitudinous and brilliant" the *Times* calls them, have assembled to do him honour. At one of them the Prince of Wales was chairman. The other was presided over by Sir Mountstewart Grant-Duff, whilst the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh took part in the proceedings. It is said that Mr. Stanley's "latest travels have practically completed our knowledge of the great equatorial region of Africa, and it is not a little curious to note that in completing it he has in many respects merely restored life, truth, and activity to legends and geographical traditions which have come down to us from almost prehistoric times. We know now that the pigmies really exist, and that the Mountains of the Moon are no mere inventions of travellers or fiction of geographers. We know the real source from which the Nile derives its inexhaustible supplies of fertilizing flood, and Equatorial Africa now presents no geographical problem of the first order for future solution." The *Times*, after mentioning these and some other discoveries, remarks, "If these discoveries stood alone, Mr. Stanley might well be held to have abundantly earned the gold medal which the Royal Geographical Society has had specially struck in his honour; when they are associated with the heroic sufferings and adventures which the great explorer and his companions have endured in a humane and disinterested cause, they also explain and justify the brilliant and unparalleled reception which was accorded the traveller yesterday." Mr. Stanley gave a very interesting account of the various districts which he had explored; and we doubt not that the interest which he has excited will be fully gratified when his promised volume appears. "No one," says *The Times* again, "who listened to his very striking address can have failed to recognize its profound interest and importance, or have hesitated to echo the emphatic and cordial words in which the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh expressed the thanks of the meeting and its welcome to one who has shown himself to be one of the world's greatest travellers."

THE TRUE FAST.—Archdeacon Farrar has contributed to an English magazine an article on the subject of Fasting, in which he controverts some popular teaching on the subject, and points out the best way of complying with the requirement in its true sense. We have no doubt that great errors have been committed both in the use and in the abuse and also in the disuse of fasting. But this is too large a subject for discussion in this place. We would rather draw attention to some of the very useful remarks on the kind of fasting which Archdeacon Farrar recommends to Christian people. We are not quite sure that he has a right to speak contemptuously of those slight changes in food which not only involve self-denial, but which are also made means of discipline. But we are sure that he speaks wisely when he indicates some forms of self-denial—not quite so common—which might well be practised by us all. For example, he says, it would be well if those who are addicted to sharp speeches and censoriousness were to keep almost unbroken silence for the forty days of Lent. Perhaps very few of

us could easily compute the number of those who would thus be reduced to silence; but we agree with the Archdeacon in thinking that the gain would be infinite. In regard to the mere literal sense of fasting, he thinks, and medical men generally declare, that most men habitually eat too much, and would do well to eat less, and especially to reduce the amount of animal food which they consume; and he suggests that during Lent it might be useful to abstain from stimulants. He declares that fasting is not "an aid to sober-mindedness," as has often been asserted; and he quite properly points out that if, on the one hand, it is a discipline, on the other hand, it lays men open to peculiar temptations. As we have said, we cannot consider the subject comprehensively here; but there is much in this article which deserves consideration.

COMPENSATION.—The English Government, in proposing some kind of local option in regard to licensed houses, has also proposed to give compensation to those innkeepers whose business may be destroyed by the operation of the new law. Nothing could be fairer. An industry built up under the sanction of the law cannot justly be destroyed without compensation. But Sir Wilfrid Lawson and his friends will have none of it. They will rather give up their favourite scheme than save the publican, whom they seem to hate more than they love temperance. When the British Parliament emancipated the slaves in the West Indies, they gave compensation to their owners. The teetotallers of Sir W. Lawson's calibre would have pronounced the traffic immoral, and would have refused to have sanctioned the payment of the money; but Englishmen of that day considered themselves responsible for the slaveholding, and therefore bound to share the loss sustained by the slaveholders in giving up the slaves. We shall be very much surprised if Englishmen of the present day are found to be less honest than those of the past. Temperance is a high virtue. Plato makes it one of the three fundamental virtues; but he adds a fourth, Justice, which is the bond of the other three. Shall we be just, if we ruin men by destroying a business which we have sanctioned, and from which we have drawn considerable revenues?

HOURS OF LABOUR.—He must be a very hard-hearted man who does not sympathize with the endeavour to shorten the hours of labour; and it is much to be hoped that it may be accomplished in a way that will be ultimately advantageous to all classes. But immediate legislation on the subject would have many dangers. In the first place, it is not quite easy to enforce laws of this kind, even if they were passed. But supposing them passed and enforced, how are we to provide that the worker shall be paid for his eight hours' work as much as he received for nine or ten hours? Are we prepared for the parliamentary regulation of wages; and, if so, how far is it to extend? and what will be its relations to strikes and lock-outs? A moment's reflection shows us that such an interference with free contract may involve a kind of social revolution. Yet something may be done, in extension of what has already been accomplished on behalf of women and children. We greatly fear, indeed, that the classes that most need to be considered are just those which are in greatest danger