

PAY YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS.

In this number of the DOMINION CHURCHMAN, envelopes are enclosed for subscribers [who have not yet paid] to remit their arrears, and also their subscriptions in advance.

All arrears must be paid up to the end of 1886 at the rate of \$2.00 per annum; one dollar additional will pay up to 31st Dec., 1887. We trust this will be a sufficient hint for all, to kindly forward their subscriptions immediately. Those who have already done so, will be doing a kind favour by forwarding \$1.00 for a new subscriber, so that we may be able to double our subscription list, and thus be placed in the same position as we hope all our subscribers will be,—in having a "Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year."

A LITTLE CHILD AMONG US—A SHORT CHRISTMAS SERMON.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR CLARK, M. A.

"He took a little child and set him in the midst of them."—Mark ix., 36.

BEAUTIFUL and significant was the gentle rebuke which our Lord thus administered to the ambitious thoughts which were arising in the minds of his disciples. The men whom He had called around him to bear witness against the world were themselves becoming worldly. Pride and self-seeking were springing up in the founders of that kingdom the first requirement of which was poverty of spirit in those who would be its subjects.

Had He been so long with them and had they known so little what spirit He was of? Had they listened to his teachings and yet had not discovered what they should be who took upon them the yoke of Him who was meek and lonely of heart? How shall He bring home to them the needed lesson which they had until now failed to learn? How shall He lovingly and tenderly yet powerfully and effectually give them to know that they must be converted from their pride and worldliness? "He took a little child and set him in the midst of them."

Did He think, when He performed this significant act, of the great gift of the eternal Father to the children of men, when He called to him the Son of His love, and clothed him with our humanity, and set him as a little child in the midst of us? We cannot tell. We do know, indeed, that He saw far more deeply into the meaning of all his own actions than we can see; and a meaning which is so plain to us can hardly have been hidden from Him.

The disciples of Christ in this incident furnished a picture of the world at large; and the reproof which was administered to them was far more needed by the mass of mankind. The whole world lay in sin, ignorant of the very nature of God, and therefore ignorant of the highest good of man. Little could the world know of the doings of Him who was ever taking down the mighty from their seat, and exalting them of low degree. And yet that world was made up of God's own creatures, whom He had made, whom He loved, whom He desired to bless, and therefore it was that He withheld not his only son, but took him and set him as a little child in the midst of fallen humanity, that His love and self-sacrificing desire for our salvation might be known.

But not once only in the history of the world was this demonstration of the lowly love of Christ given to the children of men. The events in the history of redemption, in the manifestation of the Eternal World, are not dead fossils buried under the strata of succeeding ages, but ever living facts, as fresh, as powerful as on the day of their first occurrence. And on this Christmas day, when we are in thought standing by the manger of Bethlehem, the Almighty Father seems to come to us again in great mercy and set His son as a little child in the midst of us.

And sore need there is, brethren, that we should feel anew that gentle and tender touch, to awaken us from our selfishness and our worldliness. If the disciples of Jesus were cured by the treatment of their divine Master, the same evil disease has not been driven from the world in which we dwell. It is still found in the nation, in the Church, in the family, and to all of these does our Father in Heaven come in love this day, bidding them learn anew the lesson of the gift of His son.

I. He comes to the nation.

There is a greatness to which men may rightly aspire in the nation, the greatness of goodness, the power to bless and help, the glory of leaving those around us better than we found them. And men are aspiring to greatness in the nation. But is this the greatness that they are seeking? We must not answer uncharitably. But we are sure that these are not the thoughts of all who are contending for place and power. We are sure because in that case they would use other means for the gaining of their ends. It is now as it was among the disciples of Christ—there is a strife among men as to which of them shall be greatest, which of them shall have most money, which of them shall gain most votes, which of them shall have the largest amount of followers, which of them shall have the most extensive patronage.

To these poor, blind children of this world the Father comes in love again this day and sets His Son in the midst of them; and tells them, this it is to be great. This is true human greatness for this is the greatness of God. Be as little children. Be as this little child, humble, loving, self-sacrificing. "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men."

II. So also He comes to the Church.

There surely we shall find the spirit of the little child—among those who are called out of the world, who are not of the world, even as He was not of the world. Here, if men seek for greatness, it will be only for the sake of usefulness, only that God may be exalted and they may be forgotten, only that men may be blessed and that theirs may be the happiness of helping onward that work of blessing.

Would to God that this could be thought, even in the exercise of the widest charity, Alas, even here, among the members of Jesus Christ, ay, even among these who bear the vessels of the Lord there is still the strife for greatness. For the children of the kingdom are forgetting their oneness, and are saying, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas," and the Paul and the Apollos and the Cephas of these days love to have it so—love to think of themselves as the "greatest," although they are the "meanest."

Here on Christmas day, let us learn the lesson of true greatness. Let us go to the manger throne

and ask that little child to teach us the divine lesson, that He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, that he sought not His own honor, but the honor of him that sent him.

III. And He comes to the family.

To the Christian family, and here, if anywhere, will surely be found the spirit of childlike love and self-forgetfulness and self-sacrifice. And, blessed be God, that spirit is not wanting in many a Christian home, and especially on this day it will have many a joyful assembly where sorrowful remembrances will not quench the Christmas rejoicing; and the gladness of the festival will not cause to be forgotten the sober gratitude which remembers the manifold goodness of the Lord.

But why and how is it that this blessed Spirit sprinkles so many of its children with its own cleansing and renewing power? Is it not because the heart of man has been opened to this blessed influence by the touch of the hand of that little child who was, as on this day, born into the world? What was the family without Christ? It had almost ceased to be, and He raised it up again from its ruins, and by His blessed regenerating and uniting power made it to be a reflection of that great Family of the first-born above. And it is His presence—the presence as of the Child-Christ—of that man-child who was caught up to the throne of God and yet is with us evermore—that makes this to be a day of holy joy, of chastened human christian rejoicing.

O, Blessed Father in heaven, set Him, that little child, again in the midst of us on this day, and then we too may be such, as shall enter into Thy Kingdom.

THE DUTY OF THE CLERGY AND THE PRESS.

AN attempt has been made by the Rielite press in Toronto, and by a Jacobin Revolutionary Club, to "Bulldoze" our clergy and so gag them by threats as to prevent their speaking out manfully for God, for liberty, and for Protestant civil rights, in the great crisis now existing. The fable of the fox that lost his tail is being illustrated by the organs of the two largest sects in Ontario. *They are silenced by a political gag* so that they are dumb before the aggressions of the Papacy, and their friends are most anxious that we also should put a similar political gag into our mouths. Gags of fear or gags of reward we alike despise. The effort to silence our clergy has no doubt been partially successful. But if they would only take Canon Dumoulin as an example and bravely do their plain duty, if they would fulfil their ordination vows, there would be such a stir in Canada as would drive back the Church of Rome into its stronghold, Quebec, and this Province would no longer be sought to be made the wash-pot of the Pope, nor any longer would Archbishop Lynch, backed up by his political friends, seek to cast his shoe over Ontario. The cry, "No politics," to the clergy, is a crafty political ruse to silence a dangerous body of men, who are only too apt to act from principle and to prefer their Church and God and country to any political party. For years past the Church, clergy, and press, have been stormed at by sneer and scorn, the sectarian press has contemptuously treated us and our friends as fargone Romewards because of our