

"THE PARISH GUILD."

(CONTINUED.)

Secondly: The formation of a central executive management or head necessarily means that a comprehensive view will then be taken of all the work to be done. This is an extremely valuable result, and I think we will all readily admit its importance. What is more necessary than to see clearly what is to be done. Before attempting to remedy an evil we must understand what the evil is, or our efforts will be thrown away. Before we complete a separate work we must be sure that it will piece in with the whole. If we do not know what we are to do, how can we do it? If the artizans engaged in the building of a house do not consult each other and work on a general plan, what is the result? We shall have window frames too large for windows, door frames too small for doors, walls where there should be arches, and no beams where we would lay our floors, and general waste of effort and confusion. It is as important to understand parish work as any other work. Therefore the great value of a council at the head of affairs will at once be seen. And so the Guild, having a full and comprehensive understanding of what is to be done, will be in a position to have it done in the most advantageous manner. With proper direction there cannot then be two organizations straining different ways, but all will pull together. It surely seems to be but reasonable that as the council knows just what is to be done, it will therefore most easily provide the best means of doing it.

Thirdly: Another advantage becomes apparent. The Guild, from its large membership, provides a splendid reserve force,—a powerful auxiliary to come to the aid of an overworked Chapter. If there is a sudden increase in the work of any of the Chapters of the Guild, immediately extra help is forthcoming from this reserve force, and so the Chapter may accomplish its work as usual. The Guild is in this connection a great balance wheel equalizing the work and making it smooth running in every department; so that not only does it foresee what is to be done and best direct its doing, but it also ensures the due execution of work in every branch. The whole organization moves forward together, and so accomplishes whatever it undertakes.

Fourthly: It provides a splendid lubricant for the easier running of the Parish machinery. I mean its treasury. This is one of its greatest benefits. Here it provides a common fund with which in time of need to aid and sustain any church project requiring help. It has an unexcelled opportunity to obtain and direct into the proper channels whatever money may be needed. For with a membership of all church-goers, all acquainted with the objects and needs of the Guild, any pressing want can be instantly relieved, the depleted Chapter treasuries refilled, and all the annoyance and embarrassment arising from this source prevented. Of course I am assuming that Guild members realize the obligations resting on them to provide for the charitable schemes that this organization has taken in hand, for indeed I think it would be an insult to them to otherwise than take this for granted.

And lastly: There is another feature of the Guild that all will commend. I mean its great benefit to its members in making them acquainted with one another. Apart from some such means as this, it seems difficult for members of the same Church to really come to know each other. Our social customs are not especially happy in promoting friendship and acquaintance. They seem to be founded on a peculiar basis, apparently not for bringing people together, but for separating them. We can scarcely hope to accomplish much if we

know but few of our fellow Churchmen. Our field of action will be limited; and then such a state of affairs is not calculated to promote the entire good will and mutual regard that ought to exist, if anywhere, in a church. An organization that provides for the actual bringing of people together, to know each other and to engage in a common object, is of greatest value for it lays the foundation upon which a successful united Church can only be built up, the united, harmonious action of all its members. When we consider the present state of affairs, having regard to what a Church is supposed to be, it seems monstrous that the common members of this household, the Church, should not only often not know each other, but not even have a friendly feeling towards each other. Such a state of affairs must shortly bring about the disintegration of the whole Structure; and consequently we should hail with joy an organization that puts an end to such a shocking state of affairs, gives a common aim and binds the whole Church together in firmest bonds of mutual acquaintance and friendship.

Separate, and not united, we cannot hope for the same result from our Church societies. Different organizations under no common management are sure to diverge. Instead of making a grand attack they dissipate this force in futile skirmishing. One can at once see that they will lack the power of the whole body pressing forward. And there is also danger of rivalry and dissension. With independent direction what is to prevent their work from conflicting. There is great danger of unpleasantness of this sort where vigorous Associations are actively working. There is the danger of approaching work from two points of view. And all this danger the Guild removes. Then, not united, what is there to lead a non-worker to take general interest in their work? Very little. And the lack of union often makes it difficult for interest to be maintained. The Guild, however, is a rallying point for the stragglers and a recruiting ground for the new workers. Briefly these are the advantages of the union.

We have seen that it is well calculated to arouse and stimulate the interest of non-workers in what is being done. That it enrolls and thus makes available a great reserve. That it obtains a clear and comprehensive view of the entire field, and consequently can direct with precision the necessary work and can provide the best means of its being done. We have further seen that it ensures the due execution of what it perceives is necessary to be done, by means of these reserves which it has brought together and has made available for any emergency. That it enables the creation of a fund for promoting Church projects which otherwise could not be assisted. And, lastly, that it is most excellently qualified to secure the permanence of these results by uniting the Parish in harmony and good fellowship. Surely the Guild has a good reason for being.

I think, therefore, that we will all agree that if a Church is of value, a Church Guild is also of value. For, however we regard it, we see that its whole purpose is to carry into effect that which will make the Church move ahead, a united body with one purpose and mind towards the full attainment of its highest purpose, the whole welfare of men.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

"You say a boil is painful, but that is impossible, for matter without mind is not painful. The boil simply manifests your belief in pain through inflammation and swelling, and you call this belief a boil. This remarkable concentrated twaddle is not, as might be easily supposed, an extract from one of those journals professing to be humorous, and which jest sadly—very sadly—and painfully from week to week. It is not in any way intended as jest.

It is meant as a plain and sober statement of a part of the creed of a body claiming to have a considerable number of adherents in the United States and elsewhere, and known as the Christian Scientists! Their Christianity and their science are very different from the things which are usually meant by those words, and are, in fact, arbitrary terms, which have nothing of their usual sense. 'Christian Scientists' deny a soul to man, because they say a soul cannot be in matter; they impiously reject the Trinity, and consequently the Atonement, and reduce the other most sacred truths to nothingness! Their religious opinions are expressed in language of the character of which the farrago of rubbish on the boil is a fair example. All that Christians hold most dear is destroyed by them, and yet they seem to think that, by the use of the word 'Christian' as an adjective, in some sort of way they still have a part in the Christian faith. They are a terrible example of the way in which weak minded people may be tempted into what may be called abnormal schism.—Selected.

REUNION.

(From the New Zealand Church News.)

The cable has told us that the Pope will probably summon to Rome Cardinal Moran of Sydney and Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore, to confer with Cardinal Vaughan on the subject of the proposed union of the Anglican and Roman Churches. His Holiness is said to be desirous of having the advice of these three representative ecclesiastics on so great and momentous a matter. This movement towards union must of course be regarded as only in its initial stage, but it is to be devoutly hoped that these initial proceedings may lead on steadily in the direction in which they indicate. Cardinal Vaughan has already ventured upon the question in a remarkable address to a Conference of the Catholic Truth Society, in which he dealt with the growing desire everywhere manifest in Christendom for the union of Churches and the reunion of their separated brethren. The Cardinal is of the opinion that the Roman Church * * * * * would be ready to admit changes and modification in her discipline and in legislation which concerns times and circumstances. Other points that might be conceded were the celibacy of the clergy, communion in both kinds, a vernacular liturgy, and some changes in liturgical language. These, however, are not the only considerations at issue, but it is much to know that Rome is likely to be willing to concede anything at all in a question of this kind. Apparently there is now a disposition on her part to consider reasonably the condition of Christendom, and to find a ground for common action by a readiness to reduce non-essentials to a minimum, where necessary. Unquestionably the present day is pregnant with a universal desire for reunion. The signs of the times predict it; and although it may be the most difficult problem that could be conceived, we cannot believe that our Lord's dying intercession for the success of His Church could be in disaccord with the Father's will: and, therefore, it must yet receive its fulfilment. In the development towards this consummation already begun, many assumed obstacles will vanish on nearer approach; and it is gratifying to find that all sections in Christendom are becoming more and more disposed to deal with this grave question in the spirit of our own motto: "*In necessariis unitas; in dubiis libertas; in omnibus caritas.*" If, however, Rome will seek for union only on the basis of England's complete submission, as has been hinted, then the thing is impossible. Even so, the outcome might be more friendly relations between the two Churches, which would be something gained.