

# The Church Guardian,

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EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR: REV. JOHN D. H. BROWNE, Lock Drawer 29, HALIFAX, N. S.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: REV. EDWYNS. W. PENTREATH WINNIPEG, MANITOBA.

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## THE CLOSE OF LENT.

WE are nearing the close of Lent. How have we spent it? Has it done for us what the Church intends that it should? Has it wrought in us a contrite spirit, a deeper sense of our own sinfulness, a fuller knowledge of the mercies of Christ? Has it brought to us, under all its solemnity and sadness, something of that "peace which passes all understanding," nay, in our nearness to Christ, even a foretaste of that joy, the fulness of which *hereafter* passes man's imagination to conceive? Has it brought us to feel—and this is the end of every one of our Church's seasons and ordinances—that He is All in All, the Alpha and Omega, and that any thing which keeps us from Him, the Source and Centre of our Life, must be of evil? Have we learned to feel sin more sinful, His service sweeter than before? Oh, that we could all answer with glad conviction that we feel ourselves in very deed nearer our Master! If it is not so, if Lent has been to us either an unmeaning formality or an irksome and wearisome hindrance to our ordinary pleasures and amusements, then, most surely, instead of having drawn closer to our Lord we have drawn further from Him, we have put greater and wider barriers between Him and ourselves, we have rendered ourselves so much the more unfit for His Presence hereafter. Let us stop to consider for a little while where we stand, and if through heedlessness or thoughtlessness we have wasted the opportunities which this Lent has offered us, or turned a deaf ear to its solemn call, let us endeavour, by God's help, during the brief remaining days to redeem the time.

That week, most awful in its commemoration of the Death and Passion of our Redeemer, remains, wherein to humble our souls before our God. The contemplations of those sufferings, so awful in their character, may well fill us with sorrowful self-abasement when we reflect that it was sin—which made them necessary—sin so hateful in the sight of the most Holy God, yet which to us appears some times so venial! Thus gathering up the fragments that yet remain to us of this solemn and most wholesome season, we may be fitted to rejoice with His redeemed ones when Easter dawns with the blessed message of His Resurrection.

## THE INFLUENCE OF ENDOWMENTS.

WE desire to advocate limited Endowments for our Parishes, being of opinion that they would materially benefit the clergy, while helping the laity, especially in the smaller Missions, to sustain the ministrations of the Church. We know what arguments may be advanced against such a course, but we can only say facts as drawn from actual experience do not sustain the objectors in their opposition.

To meet one of these objections, we give below an outside testimony to the value of these endowments which, we think, will be accepted as conclusive.

The President of the Baptist Union of England, (Mr. H. Stowell Brown), in his opening address to that body, and speaking on this very subject, said: "It may be objected that independence would make ministers lazy. . . . Let us test the matter by an appeal to facts—to what, at least, I think we may accept as facts. To a large extent the clergy of the Church of England are not exactly men of independent means, but men who for their incomes do not depend upon the will of their congregations. Indolence on the part of most of the clergy of the Established Church would not diminish their incomes, diligence on their part would not increase them. If they spend their lives in utter idleness they do not get a penny the less; if they work like slaves they do not get a penny the more. Well, then, with this plentiful scope of idleness, and in the absence of all pecuniary inducement to diligence, how stands the case? From what I see, from what I hear, from what in various ways I learn, I cannot but think that the clergy of the Church of England are, as a rule, inferior to no other ministry in the matter of diligence. Many of the most independent among them work quite as hard as any of the most dependent among us. And, indeed, the work that a minister may do just because need drives him to it, is not likely to be of a very high order."

Of course the Endowments to which we refer are altogether different from the English Endowments. What we would advocate would be a limited endowment, say two or three thousand dollars, for each parish, and we suggest this as something which the parishes should make efforts to secure for themselves. It is an admitted fact that the incomes of the clergy are, as a rule, much too small, and as things are at present, it taxes the best energies of the Mission Boards to raise them even to their present amounts. But the Mission Boards ought to be in a position to undertake new work. There ought not to be a single year in the history of any diocese without the opening of a new Mission. Unhappily in the past the Mission Boards have not had the heart to undertake new work while the incomes of the clergy in the existing Missions were so small and insufficient.

Now, in a hundred ways a small Parochial Endowment could be got together, and year by year added to, cheering the missionary, and giving confidence and increased zeal to the people, while materially promoting the best interests of the Church. The fact is, this is a matter which one is surprised has not met with favour in every parish, and the warm support of clergy and laity, for it would make the clergyman more independent, while increasing in a way easily understood the independence of the people.

We suggest to the several Mission Boards that they follow the example set them by the Mission Board of the Diocese of Fredericton, which meets any sum that may be raised for the purpose with an equal amount from its own funds. Or, better still, we ask our rich laity to follow in the footsteps of that noble-hearted layman of the Diocese of Quebec who has generously contributed an equal amount to the sum raised in any Mission for the purpose, and in this way has helped to endow nearly a dozen Missions of that Diocese.

We leave the subject for the present, commending it to the serious consideration of those concerned, trusting that its importance will not be overlooked.

## HOLY WEEK.

WE are approaching the most solemn and most sacred part of Lent. Hitherto our thoughts have been mostly occupied in contemplating the temptations of our Lord and the power of Satan in leading mankind away from God. In the victory of Christ we were made to see how we can become victors. And the days that have intervened have been spent in applying the example and precepts of our Blessed Lord to the subduing of our bodies; and in the practice of self-denials and self-mortifications to prepare ourselves the better to be witnesses of His last mysterious agonies on earth.

The Life of Christ was a very real thing, as real as are our lives. His Birth, His subsequent Life, including His temptation, suffering and death, were enacted on this earth on which we now dwell. The Church endeavours to make these facts of history real to us so that we may fully grasp their meaning. Jesus Christ lived for man, soon we are to see Him die for man; He came to earth that, partaking of man's nature, He might, in fulfilment of prophecy, and for the great love wherewith He loves man, die in man's stead.

If we have prayerfully been contemplating, as the Church would have us do, the meaning of that Life, we are best prepared to dwell upon, and to be affected by, His death. God the Son came to earth to deliver man from the effects of the Fall, from the curse and tyranny of sin, from eternal death. He came to do His own and His Father's will, to suffer and to die for man's Salvation; and now we draw near those momentous days, when all the heavy load of the world's sin is to be placed upon His shoulders. When He, the Meek and Gentle One, He who went about doing good, whose touch restored sight to the blind and healing to the sick, and brought back the dead to life again, will have to bear the cruel mockings and scourgings, and the bitter shame of a malefactor and a malefactor's death. Surely we will heed the Church's calls to come apart awhile to contemplate the pain and suffering endured so willingly for our sins. "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow," the Blessed One says to each of us, as in His deep affliction and anguish He bears His cross to Calvary. It cannot be that we will behold such suffering as indifferent spectators. As we follow Him day by day and witness all the cruel wrongs which He bore for our sakes, it cannot be that we will cling to the sins which caused His Agony and Bloody Sweat, His Cross and Passion. Jesus Christ did not come only to save the world of eighteen cen-