

works. His miracles of mercy, show me His boundless activities, for "He went about doing good," and put that example before me and tell me try and follow Him.

But what is this cross, *the cross*?—"by the cross." How the question grows in interest! Brethren, you know there is only one answer to it, and that is that this was the cross upon which the Atonement for sin was made. This was the cross by which in dying Christ rendered it possible for you and me to live; this was the cross by which He made the justification of the sinner before God so complete that you and I can be justified before God as if we had never sinned at all, and, though we are sin'ul, yet, in looking at the Sinless One through faith, God will count us as if we too were sinless for Christ's sake. So when we look at this cross we understand now that it is the atoning sacrifice that was made upon it that makes it *the cross*. You know how many things are said about this; you know that Jesus said Himself that this was His body which was broken, this was His blood which was shed, for the sins of the world; you know it is written "He died, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God;" you know we are told that this blood, "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." This it is which makes the cross by which we stand or sit to-night.

Perhaps you say "I do not understand this, I do not understand the mystery of the cross." No, of course, you do not; neither do I. If we understood it, it would be a human scheme; but it is a Divine scheme. Yet are there not many things that you do not understand? Have you lived so long without learning that there are more things in this life around you that you do not understand than those you know and do understand? Do you know, do you understand anything of that terrible tornado we have read of within the last two days in every paper that we have taken up, which drew down those houses as if they were made of sand, and crushed men, women, and children as if they were worms? What do you know of it? Do you understand your own life which brought you here to-night? How did it begin, whence its origin, when will it end? What do you know of the life that boats within you, which lives and loves and thinks and plans and dares? You know nothing about it, yet you believe in it; and, great as is this mystery of the cross, still we are undone if we do not believe in it as sinners, and it is so grand a question and so great a thing that you find that while the Evangelists did not tell everything else about Christ, they told you this, all four of them, all four of them we find, give the minutest description of the death of Jesus. They did not all tell you of the angel's song, they do not all tell us of the raising of Lazarus from the dead, they do not all tell us of the many miracles that Jesus did, here and there there are some recorded, but when it comes to the death of Jesus, then we find all four Evangelists tell us of this cross in its most minute details. This it is which makes it *the cross*.

And remember, when we are pointing at the cross we point, brethren, at Him Who hung upon that cross. We do not ask you to look upon the cross, but to look at Christ upon the cross. That might be a superstition if you looked at the cross: but it is like a grand picture, and in the centre of this picture there is hanging One Who is the figure that you and I are to gaze on, and all the rest are accessories only. They are nothing compared with this cross. We look only at Him Who rendered the forgiveness of our sins possible, at Him Who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light. Events, as you know, are important only in proportion to their results. The greatest battles that have ever been fought have become great in the history of the world because of the results to nations, and to the life of nations, that have followed out of those terrible

battles. So it is that when men live, their life is nothing; when they die that life is embalmed. Stratford-upon-Avon, what would that be if it were not for the name of William Shakespeare?—and when William Shakespeare lived in Stratford-upon-Avon he excited probably no curiosity, and very little interest, among his townfolk, but, because he wrote in such a way as to put the world in his debt, that has redeemed Stratford-upon-Avon from oblivion; and now men visit it, yes, and men come across the ocean, and men come from America, and, among all the things that they must see, they must see Stratford-upon-Avon, because William Shakespeare was born there. Or what would we think of the town of Bedford if it had not been for John Bunyan, if it were not that the tinker had been imprisoned there, and that there he dreamed out that wonderful allegory, "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress"? And so this world, science tells us, is one of the smallest, the most insignificant of God's planets, and when all these planets shall be burnt up, and when everything shall be dissolved, this world of ours will be gone, but there is one thing that will embalm it also for ever in the ages of eternity,—that Christ was born, that Christ lived, that Christ walked, that Christ died upon it, that Christ rose in it again from the dead, and from it has ascended back to the right hand of His Father; and it is this which makes it what it is,—it is the monument of earth that the cross of Jesus should have stood upon it. And the world, though it may think nothing of this, will have to learn one day what the Church now holds to its heart,—that there is one name in the world which is the most precious and the most powerful, and that there is one spot in the world, and that is Calvary, upon which this Cross stood, which makes this world what it is. All other names shall pass away, but Jesus has done that which never will pass away, never recede, never be forgotten, never decay, never die. It is always fresh, it is always giving breath to new interests. The story of this Cross by which we stand is going out upon every wind of heaven to all parts of the earth; and to those nations that do not yet know of this message, the story of the Cross has yet to be told. Jesus has done all this, and when the names of the greatest that have ever lived shall have faded, when the brain of the great thinker has been stilled, when the soldier shall have sheathed his sword for ever, when the very names of these holy women that stood by the Cross shall no longer be recorded, then in the ages of eternity, in louder cadences and in louder acclaim, shall be heard the name of Him Who hung upon that Cross for us: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain"; and when kingdoms shall totter and fall, when empires and thrones shall be no more, there shall be no end of His government—the government is upon His shoulders. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, because, brethren, the only kingdom that lasts is the kingdom of love, the only kingdom that is everlasting in this world of ours is the kingdom of love. That which stooped from heaven to earth, that which humbled itself upon the Cross and died upon the Cross, that love which goes out to seek and to save that which is lost, that love which, even in all our guilt and all our sins, pities us and pardons us—that is the kingdom of love beating in the heart of our everlasting Father, beating in the soul of His only Son, and having its climax in the death of the Saviour circling the world to-night with those hopes and giving the last note of the anthem of the angel: "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace goodwill towards men."

Therefore let us in this festival week of the great Atonement—even when we are busy, let us not forget this Cross; if we cannot all gather round it as we are doing to-night, if we cannot in our busy lives all stand by this Cross, still let not a busy world cause us to leave it behind or to forget it; because, brethren, although a

man may live without the Cross, he cannot die without it; and when the great and final change comes our only hope will be that we are able to stand or sit or lie at the foot of that Cross. When our sight is dimming with the mists of death, when the nearest and the dearest on this earth cannot detain us another moment, when the silver cord is loosed and when the golden bowl is broken, when the pitcher is broken at the fountain, and when the wheel is broken at the cistern, when the world is slipping from beneath our feet then what a glorious thing, what a happy thing if there be one great beating Heart by us on which we can lay our dying head, and if those loving and tender hands shall thaw the chills of death, and warm our souls in the sunlight of eternal love and eternal life; then—

Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the Cross we spend,
Life and joy and peace possessing,
From the sinner's dying Friend.

Here we'll sit for ever viewing
Mercy pour'd in streams of blood;
Precious drops, our souls bedewing,
Plead and claim our peace with God.

—Family Churchman.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

By Canon 16 of the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada, adopted at its tenth session in 1880 with regard to "Marriage within the prohibited degrees," which adopts the Table of Degrees set forth in the year 1563, and usually annexed to the Book of Common Prayer, and forbids any clergyman of this Ecclesiastical Province to knowingly solemnize a marriage within the degrees prohibited by such Table, it is further provided "A printed copy of the Table of the Prohibited Degrees shall be placed in the vestry room or near the entrance to every church in this Ecclesiastical Province at the charge of the parish, in some place where it may conveniently be read." Can any of our readers inform us whether this Law of the Synod of the Province is generally complied with? We, ourselves, do not remember ever having seen such a Table of Prohibited Degrees placed as required by the Canon.

ANOTHER provision or enactment of the Ecclesiastical Legislature of this Province is 'that every Deacon who shall from necessity be placed in charge of a parish or mission shall be under the direction of a neighboring priest until he be advanced to the Priesthood.' The Canon clearly enough implies that nothing but necessity can authorize the placing of a Deacon in charge of a parish or mission at all; and it provides also for the supervision of one in the higher order of the Priesthood. Is this rule of the Provincial Synod generally observed? Without doubt the employment of Deacons is very general; whether in all cases necessity exists or not it is not for us to determine.

HOLY WEEK is just again about to dawn. How the Church expects her children to observe it is evident from the careful preparation which she has made in her Prayer Book for the close following of the footsteps of her Divine Head in the special Epistles and Gospels for each day of the week and for the full service, that is special Collects, Epistle and Gospel for Good Friday and Easter Even. Would that opportunity might be given in every parish or mission throughout our land for a daily service throughout the week! It depends largely upon the clergy themselves whether this be done or not. There are very few parishes or missions, we feel sure, wherein a few faithful would not be found ready and happy to attend the regular