

to make them more effective, Dr. Rainsford says:—

Before we talk, however, of increasing our churches, the question is, how shall we make the churches we have more efficient in their work? I think it must be evident to us all, that the large and costly churches wherewith our city abounds must always stand as the most direct embodiment and illustration of the actual religion of Jesus Christ to the masses of that city. Hospitals, of course, and other charitable institutions are also embodiments of the Christian idea; but even before these, the churches do represent to the minds of the multitude the Christian ideas of the time. Let us try, then, and look on these churches from the outsider's point of view, use his eyes, and see what kind of Christianity these churches seem to witness to.

In most of our large city churches, a number of well-to-do people gather, week by week. They pay so much towards the support of the institution in which they worship, and for their money, receive an equivalent in the shape of a pew, which is either rented or owned by them, which is as much their property as the smoking-room is the property of a member of the club, or her boudoir the property of the lady of the house. More so, indeed, for law has decided that a pew is real estate. Into this private property the outsider is often courteously admitted, should he seek to attend worship; but he has no right there, whatever. These churches are simply to provide worship for those who combine to support them; and those who do not care enough about Christianity to pay for the support of a church, have no place in them except as guests; and those who are not able to pay the large sum that many of them demand in pew rent, must either perpetually attend church as a guest, or must go to some poorer church. This may be natural, but is not right. If our churches are to do the work they must do, it will be because they teach the multitude of 'Gallios' really to believe that we want them in the Church, want them to taste and see how gracious Christ can make all life to men; want to make them believe that since, before mankind, Jesus set an open door, we believe in an open door, too; that at that door all are welcome; that no one so worldly, so careless, so godless, so ragged, so dirty, so dark with despair, so lost, so skulking, so ashamed, so afraid, coming from any corner of this wicked world, but he can come and welcome. Make them see that the churches are not anxious before all things to get something from him, but that something we do hold in trust for him, and that, before all things, we do desire to give him; that this is our aim, this is our duty, for this we live, for this we support our services, and pay our ministers, and offer our sacrifices; that this, as well as the provision of worship for our Christian people, and teaching and guidance for our Christian youth, is the duty of the Church. We cannot make one class of Church embody the idea of worship alone, and another class the missionary Gospel to the careless or unbelieving. This is impracticable, and in result hurtful. We must seek to embody a gospel of invitation to the multitudes of today in every Christian Church we erect.

There are some Christian men who hold that the duty of worshipping God is each individual's first concern; and as long as he performs this duty faithfully and to his own satisfaction, and so long as the worshipping organization to which he belongs is self-sustaining, he need not greatly trouble himself whether the poor or the careless join in it or not. This is a perfectly intelligible position; but I beg leave to think it will not long remain a tenable one. For, to repeat what I said a little time ago, the public will judge of us and our Christianity as they see our religion embodied in the worship of our great and prominent churches; and on these churches falls the responsibility of giving

to the public an adequate or an inadequate conception of Christ's religion. The great church must not be content with merely providing a luxurious worship for those who can pay liberally, and who own its floor, while it gathers up the crumbs that fall from its rich table, and with these crumbs supports mission houses or chapels. If it act so, the public will say, "You are content to spend the larger portion of your income and your interest in providing for yourselves a luxurious religion, while on the duties of seeking the needy, the godless, and the lost, you spend less money and less attention."

I am very sure that to make our city churches more efficient, it is necessary to combine in them, far more thoroughly than we yet have done, aggressive Christian work with the duty of Christian worship. The Saviour's words, 'Go out and compel them to come in,' are for no one time or people; and the Church that would lead men to Him must bind the words on her brow and feed on them in her soul. She must make it, beyond any possible misapprehension, plain to all men that she believes in the freedom of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. She must not even seem to place a tax on the privilege of being converted. Jesus never intended that any man, be he Jew, Turk, infidel or heretic, should be asked to pay an entrance fee to the Lord's Supper, of which His Church is the custodian. If she expects the multitudes, who surround her churches or pass them by, who care not for her religion, to pay for what they don't value, she expects too much. As a matter of fact, it has become so fixed a principle with us that the Church's services are for those only who are willing and able to pay for them, that we are inclined to resent the presence of those who do not pay.

The Church of God ought not to be a place where money can buy privileges. In the Church of God, as well as under the sod, men are equal. The distribution of sittings in churches upon competitive principles—the best seat going to the highest bidder—is an anomaly that disgraces our Christianity in the eyes of an unbelieving public. We revolt at simony in the pulpit; but we practise it all the while in the pews. It may be sometimes necessary to yield to the desire of families to have a definite place assigned them; but this assignment should be made on some principle that will give the man who pays five cents a Sunday as good a place as he who can pay five thousand dollars a year.

I fully believe that it is this intolerable pew system that has been largely responsible in producing the alienation which keeps the working classes away from our churches; nor do I believe that we shall ever get them there again, until we have altered radically our present modes of raising money for church support. The poor have a natural dislike to a system which reminds them of their poverty, in the very place where they are told that in God's eyes a long purse makes no difference. Unable to pay for sittings, they yet have a human pride which resents their being poked into odd corners and free seats and galleries, where the richer people do not go.

A HINT TO CLERGY AND OTHERS.—A Parishioner—an invalid to whom writing is always more or less painful, finding no reference in our Home Field Columns to the Parish in which she is, writes:—"It is only the feeling that I do not like the Church in—to seem as one dead (which it by no means is) that makes me attempt it.—Besides when the people are reading about the Church in other places, they take more interest if they see something—about themselves?"

LET your zeal begin with yourself, then you may with justice extend it to your neighbor.—*Thomas a Kempis.*

NEWS FROM THE HOME FIELD.

DIocese of NOVA SCOTIA.

AMHERST.—The Chapter of the Rural Deanery of Amherst will meet D.V., at Stewiacke on May 28th. First service, Evening Prayer, May 27th.

LIVERPOOL.—This parish of Trinity Church is one but seldom heard from, and perhaps we are too backward as regards furnishing our quota of 'News from the Home Field,' we will therefore break this silence for a space by referring briefly to our Church services in the Holy season lately ended.

Throughout Lent we observed with satisfaction and thankfulness that the congregations were exceptionally large, increasing in numbers as Holy Week approached; and all through that week a goodly number of reverent worshippers assembled morning and evening, preparing themselves we trust for the great feast of Easter Day.

On Good Friday there were four full services, two in the Parish Church, and two in the country churches; one four and the other eight miles distant from the Mother Church. This must have kept the curate's day very fully occupied. It was remarked that the congregations in the Parish Church on Good Friday were larger than they had ever before been on that day, nearly all the seats being taken up, and not only was the Church well filled, but it was an unusually quiet day throughout the town. It is gratifying to see a growing tendency towards the observance of this sacred day.

Easter Day was bright and fine as one would always like it to be. The church too was bright with its white vesting, and lilies and other flowers with which some of the ladies had decked the altar and font. The organist and choir also did their part well. There were many communicants: forty-eight at the early celebration, and 67 later—in all 115. This included nearly all the adults who were able to get to Church on Easter morning. The services were all that one could wish except for one great cause of sorrow, the evident feebleness of our beloved rector, the Rev. Dr. Nichols, now for over forty years rector of the parish. He had been too ill for several weeks to attend the services, but by a great effort was present on Easter Day at Morning Prayer, and was able to take a part in the celebration. We hope and pray that he may be restored to at least a measure of his former health.

On Easter Monday the vestry met as usual. The former churchwardens were again elected, delegates appointed to the Synod and to the Centennial celebration at King's College, one hundred dollars voted to be added in future to the salary of the curate, the Rev. A. W. Harley, M.A., and the finances of the church shown by the accounts of the churchwardens to be in a most satisfactory condition.

New Ross.—During the time we had so much snow, a very pleasant and useful surprise was given the Rector by his faithful parishioners, in the shape of a good substantial sleigh. Leaving out of the question the value of the gift it speaks well for the kindly feeling that exists between priest and people, showing in a most conclusive manner the confidence reposed in their spiritual friend.

Of the services in Lent we can give a very good report of ourselves. They were frequent, but with all the good excuses really at hand, such as bad roads, long distances and much sickness, the services were largely attended. This is very gratifying to those having charge of the parish, more especially as the people have not been accustomed to so many calls on their stock of loyalty to the church.

A course of sermons was preached during the latter part of Lent on the 'Prodigal Son,' and