

that all our life, with all its weaknesses, its limitations, its sorrows, its rejoicing, its solitudes, its social delights, its tears, its laughter, its hopes, its disappointments, its failures and its achievements, all, all, should be reverently laid before God as a sacrifice to His honor and His glory, in Whom we live and move and have our being. In this materialistic, money grubbing age, any repression of the imaginative faculty or attempt to keep down the development of a taste for art will do the cause of religion incalculable injury.

THE NEW CREATION.

AS the great work of the Incarnation seems to flow out of Creation, and to be the crowning and fulfilment of it, so does the work of justification proceed from the Incarnation, or hang from it as its divine and glorious fruit. The justification of a sinner is surely one of the most beautiful works of God, and deserves our loving contemplation. Looking at it simply as the transit from a state of sin to a state of sanctifying grace, without any consideration of the disposition remotely or proximately comprehended in it, it is full of wonder, and of the peculiar character of the Divine operations. The first moment of the life of grace is the last moment of the life of sin; nay, rather, it is itself the death of sin. Nothing comes between. Neither does God use the instrumentality of saint or angel, but He Himself immediately communicates that grace to His creature's soul; and the creature is justified not merely by an act of the Divine will, but by an unspeakable communication of the Divine nature. It is a greater work than the Creation, for many reasons:—first of all, it implies the Incarnation as well. Then Creation is simply something out of nothing, whereas Justification is accomplished on a previously reluctant matter—the corrupt will of man. "He," says St. Austin, "Who made you without you, will not justify you without you. Creation, again, is ordained for a natural good; Justification, for a supernatural one. To quote St. Austin again, "it is a greater thing to justify the impious than to create heaven and earth." "The good of a single grace," says St. Austin, "is greater than the natural good of the whole universe," and the Church in her collect teaches us that God manifests His omnipotence chiefly in sparing and showing mercy. Let us take a case to make it clear. A man goes forth from his house into the streets of a great city, in a state of sin. The weight of God's wrath, and the curse of the blood of Christ, are heavy upon his soul. To the angels he is a sight of unutterable loathing and disgust, if his state is known to them. He would not dare to have his sins whispered in the crowd, for the contempt even of his fellow sinners would crush him to the earth. He is the slave of the dark demon, in a bondage more foul, more degrading, more tyrannical, more abject, than the horrors of African slavery can show. In his breast, though he rarely knows it, he has the beginning of hell, and the germs of everlasting

ing hatred of Almighty God. Cain, savage and gloomy and restless, wandering cursed over the unpeopled earth, was not worse off than he; perhaps better. In the streets he meets a funeral. Thoughts crowd into his mind. Faith is awake, and on the watch. Grace disposes of him for grace. The veil falls from sin, and he turns from the hideous vision with shame, with detestation, with humility. The eye of his soul glances to his crucified Redeemer. Fear has led the way to hope, and hope has led the heart to resolve, and faith tells that his resolution will be accepted, and he loves—how can he help loving Him who will accept so poor a resolution? There is a pressure on his soul. It was the pressure of the Creator, omnipotent, immense, all-holy, and incomprehensible, on his living soul. The unseen hand was laid on him only for a moment. He has not passed half a dozen shop fronts, and the work is done—he is contrite. Hell is vanquished. The angels of heaven are in a stir of joy. His soul is beautiful. God is yearning over it with love and with ineffable desire. It needs only one cold touch of Death, and an eternity of glory lies with all its vast and spacious realms of vision before him. And yet this work so wonderful, so beautiful, as altogether worthy of Divine perfections, is not done once only, or now and then, or periodically, or to make an epoch in the world's history: it is being accomplished in churches, in hospitals, in prisons, on shipboard, on the scaffold, in the streets and fields of daily labor, close to the mower or the reaper, or the gardener, or the vine-dresser, who dreams not that God is in his neighborhood, so busy, and at so stupendous a work. For, to turn a child of Satan into a son of God is so tremendous a work, that St. Peter Chrysologus says of it, that "the angels are astonished, heaven marvels, earth trembles, flesh cannot bear it, ears cannot take it in, the mind cannot reach it, the whole creation is too weak to endure its magnitude, and is short of intellect to esteem it rightly, and is afraid of believing it because it is so much."—*The Rev Dr. Cross.*

THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD.

THE days solemnly call upon Christians to be more worthy of the 'name they bear.' The loose state of morality demands it; the shaken condition of the Constitution requires it; the very existence of the Empire depends upon it, because the experience of history teaches that a revolution is the result of the disintegration of Society, and nothing so much disintegrates Society as loose, unprincipled conditions of life. It never was asserted that England was as pure as she ought to be; but few would have anticipated, five years ago, that the higher grades of Society were capable of such a forgetfulness of purity of life, absence of honor and truthfulness, and a casting aside of all modesty and shamefacedness, as, it has since been revealed, has too frequently been found possible. The subject is a very serious

one, and involves the political future of Great Britain and Ireland. Let it be hoped that the Jubilee year of the Queen of a Court of perfect purity will not be tarnished by any such scandals as the Law Courts have during the last few years made known.

But what is the remedy? The Church of God must arise and look to her lamps! This appeal is to the Church as a whole; not to the clergy only, but to all ranks and orders of laymen and laywomen. The Church, which is really the greatest and truest Democratic body in the world, must at once adopt measures equal to this and to every emergency. Pious and well-meaning people may make many spasmodic, well-intentioned efforts; not a word shall be uttered against them, or against any number of persons (few or many) banding together to improve the state of morals in any part or in every part of the Empire. But the thing really wanted is that Churchmen and Churchwomen should just become thoroughly such in their daily life: there is no need whatever for any Society, federation, or compact in this matter. Let Church people simply live up to their privileges and profession, and then it will soon become plain that the whole tone of Society will be thoroughly purified and improved.

The impossible religion of the Puritan is not needed, and would be sure to lead to hypocrisy if the attempt were made to renew it. The error has been in the common effort so thoroughly to unite the World and the Church as to make men fancy all was right while pursuing a course of life which was almost as worldly as the most worldly would desire. This condition of things cannot be allowed to continue, and laymen and laywomen of the Church must be the people who (clergy, of course, co-operating) must improve the tone and temper of the times. The laity can do wonders if only they will try. Let every member of the Church resolve that, by the help of God, he will serve God in his day and generation. This appeal is equally intended for persons of whatever social rank they may be. The Church in which they were baptized knows of no distinction between rich or poor, high or low. As God says, 'All souls are mine,' so every member of the Church ought to share in its care for its members.

Now let it be supposed that Churchfolk would act on this truth. Every person would be anxious to help his neighbour, friend or companion. He would not go about preaching—probably there is too much of this, at least in many places—but each would try to promote the practice of a simple, honest Christianity amongst his fellows. Whatever is wrong in principle would not be allowed in conversation or practice; low jokes and innuendoes would not find laughing 'Christians' to encourage the production or reproduction of them; novels and newspapers with stories of doubtful morality would not be bought and read, but would cease to be printed because ceasing to be bought. A religious tone and principle would be firmly established by Churchmen simply living up to their Church Catechism. It does