

In New York City there are twenty-three parishes that have over five hundred communicants each. Six churches have over one thousand, and Trinity has nearly eighteen hundred. Fifty years ago there were five communicants in every one thousand of the population in the State of New York. To day there are twenty. The growth has been four times as great as the increase in population.

The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, during the year just reported, has made grants in money amounting to nearly \$115,000, and books amounting to about \$60,000. It has helped to build ninety-two churches, schools and colleges in the colonies and among missions of the Church of England. It has built or rented sixty-seven Sunday-schools in England and Wales, and maintained some hundreds of native students in India and elsewhere. Two hundred and sixty-one former students of its Training College at Tottenham are now at work as schoolmistresses in England.

Mr. John F. Smith, of Philadelphia, has made Christmas gifts amounting to \$42,000 to a number of public institutions and charitable or beneficial institutions, in sums ranging from \$5,000 to \$100. This makes in all \$100,000 dispensed by Mr. Smith for charitable purposes within the year. Among the recipients of those gifts are St. Paul's Church, Third Street, below Walnut, \$5,000; the Dorcas Society of St. Paul's Church, \$200; Protestant Episcopal City Mission, \$200; Christ Church, Franklinville, \$200; Convalescents' Retreat, \$100.

In Ireland, the Romish Church derives out of the public funds more than £687,900, annually. This includes a sum of £572,244 as per report of Commissioners of National Education of 1883-84; a sum of £112,000 to a Romish reformatory and industrial schools; a sum of £11,000 to Romish chaplains in work-houses, prisons and asylums, and to nuns in work-houses; and a sum of £21,000—being interest calculated at five per cent. accruing annually from the capital amount given the Maynooth College at the time of the disestablishment of the Irish Church.

The Church Association has protested against the new reredos in the cathedral, Sydney, the central panel of which contains a representation of the crucifixion. The figures are in bas-relief, of pure alabaster, and are about two and a half feet high. The figures of the Redeemer, the Virgin Mary and St. John are beautifully cut. The Bishop in reply to the memorial of the C. A. on the matter, said: "The Chapter are willing to refer the question brought under their notice, with reference to the removal of the whole or part of the reredos, to the Bench of Bishops, and to abide by their decision, provided that this course be agreed to by the Association." This proposal the Association have rejected.

The Cathedral of Manchester is the old Parish Church, built in 1422. Says a correspondent of the *Boston Herald*:—

I entered the enclosure of the cathedral at the early service, 6.30 a.m., and, by the number and character of the worshippers, one would have thought they were entering a Roman Catholic Church, where at this hour, in all places of the Christian world, may be seen such a gathering. I saw few of the gentry, but hundreds of workingmen and women, with their baskets, bags or parcels of luncheon, entering this spacious Church for a few moments of devotion before going to their daily work in the mills. It is on such occasions as this that one feels the importance and benefits of a "free and open Church." The choristers were present, the rich and full tones of the organ pealed forth the morning service, while the amens to the prayers were spoken in a manner that plainly spoke of sincerity.

Tramp: "Won't you help a poor man that lost his family by the Charleston earthquake?" *Housekeeper*: "Why, you are the same man that lost his family last year by the Ohio River floods." *Tramp*: "I know it, mum. I am one of the most unfortunate gentlemen on the face of the earth."

SKETCH OF LESSON.

2ND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY. JANUARY 16TH, 1887.

The Finger of God.

Passage to be read.—Exodus viii. 1-7, 16, 19.

God does not teach men only by the Bible, His ministers, and his works in nature, but also by His mercies and judgments. In our last lesson we saw how He began to teach the Egyptians by His judgments, when he gave that peculiar sign of His power and wrath upon the river (vii. 19, 20).

I. *The Finger of God upon Egypt.* And now we have some further instances of His judgments upon Egypt, her king and people. Seven of these judgments, or plagues, we shall see to-day, and as the account of them covers nearly three chapters we shall merely select passages for reading. See then how God's finger is laid in judgment.

(1) *On the water* (chap. viii. 2-7). The river just healed from the last plague, now sends forth the plagues of frogs. Frogs are always in great abundance in the river and marshy places in Egypt, but now they swarm all over the land, entering even such dry places as the ovens. The magicians imitated this plague as they had done the last, but they were not able to remove the frogs, and so Pharaoh was obliged to ask Moses to do so (v. 8).

(2) *On the dust* (chap. viii. 16-18). All travellers in Egypt find the dust a great nuisance, so abundant is it owing to the hot and dry climate. Imagine all this dust now turned by the touch of Aaron's rod into living insects, filling all the houses, and covering every thing and everybody. Such was the third plague; and this plague the magicians, you notice, were unable to imitate.

(3) *On the air* (chap. viii. 20-24). And now the air was filled with swarms of flies. So abundant were they that there was no escaping from them. Perhaps, too, they were not only troublesome, but painful. This seems to have been a more severe plague than any of the preceding, from the distinction mentioned between the Egyptians and the Israelites, and from the effect it had upon Pharaoh (v. 25).

(4) *On the cattle* (chap. ix. 1-9). After suffering thus much annoyance and pain, the Egyptians were now afflicted with great loss. A grievous pestilence attacked all their animals that were in the fields, and destroyed them, while again the Israelites were exempt from the affliction.

(5) *On the ashes from the brick kiln* (chap. ix. 8-12). For when Aaron scattered the ashes towards heaven they became dust, and covering man and beast, afflicted them with boils. And now the magicians, who had at first imitated Moses, were themselves smitten by the plague. From which we see the Finger of God more powerfully displayed.

(6) *On the sky* (chap. ix. 22-26). Thunder, and hail, and even rain seldom visit Egypt. But now they are sent forth, accompanied with fire, as the seventh plague, and so violent was the storm that men and beasts were smitten, and the herbs and every tree broken, save in the land of Goshen.

(7) *On the wind* (chap. x. 12-15). And now the terrible plague of locusts! They came in great clouds from beyond the Red Sea, covering the land and devouring every green thing which the hail had left. So fearful a plague was this that Pharaoh spoke of it as "death," verse 17.

II. *The Finger of God Recognized by the Egyptians.* When Moses first came to Pharaoh the king said "I know not the Lord," chapter v. 2. But the judgments of God gradually made him acknowledge Him. "In treat the Lord," he says, after the plague of frogs, chapter viii. 8, while after the plague of lice, even the magicians said "This is the finger of God." After the fourth plague, Pharaoh said "Go, sacrifice to your God," viii. 25. But God will be recognized not only as the God of Israel, but as the Lord JEHOVAH, and so Pharaoh at length acknowledges "The Lord (i.e., Jehovah) is righteous, and I and my people are wicked," ix. 27; x. 16. And while God thus taught Pharaoh and his people (ix. 20; x. 7) to acknowledge Him by His great judgments (viii. 4), He at the same time strengthened Israel's faith and love by His great mercies towards them (vi. 7).

Correspondence.

All Letters containing personal allusions will appear over the signature of the writer.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of our correspondents.

THE RE UNION OF CHRISTENDOM.

To the Editor of the Dominion Churchman:

SIR,—The following letter taken from *Church Bells* of 17th September, may prove interesting to those Canadian clergymen who are not in the habit of receiving English papers:

LETTER FROM THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM TO THE PRIMUS OF SCOTLAND:

"Nicodemus, by the mercy of God, Patriarch of the Holy City, Jerusalem and the whole of Palestine. To the Very Reverend Bishop of Moray, &c., Primus of the Bishops of the Anglican Church in Scotland, the Lord Robert.

"Nicodemus, by the mercy of God, Patriarch of the Holy City, Jerusalem, and the whole of Palestine, gives the heartfelt salutation in Christ our God.

"As soon as we had received it we went through with great attention your Reverence's valued letter of the month before last, in which, thanking us for the kind reception which we gave to the Reverend Charles Hale while he was staying in the Holy City, you address words of true Christian love to us, and exhibit great respect to this most holy Mother of the Churches in Zion, whence the light burst forth which has lighted the whole world, and you add the best of prayers for the union of all. And now sitting down with pleasure to make a due reply, we express our extreme joy at the words addressed to us by your Reverence, and at the opportunity which is given us of becoming in soul and spirit acquainted and familiar with you who clearly declare your zeal towards God, and are full of the love which the Lord of all, and heavenly Bridegroom and Founder of the Church our Lord Jesus Christ, set forth to His holy disciples and apostles, commanding them to love one another, and appointing this as the first and chief and characteristic mark by which true Christians should be known. Following this Divine command, this our most holy Mother of the Churches, and with her the whole Orthodox Church, earnestly beseech God every day for the union of all in one flock, according to the most true promise of the Chief Shepherd, Christ, and pray that we all may be one, united in one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, by the unity of the Spirit who spoke by the God-heralding Apostles and the Ecumenical Synods.

"Walking in accordance with the first and great commandment of love, we, too, who by the great and first High Priest have been entrusted with the presidency of this the eldest and most holy Apostolic and Patriarchal throne, counted it a sacred duty to receive with much fatherly affection and kindness the reverend presbyter, Charles Hale, who came especially to survey these sacred places, in which the undivided feet of our Lord stood, and where was accomplished the mystery of the redemption of the human race. To him we confess that we owe many thanks, because, returning our kindness in manifold degree, he has become the occasion of our becoming united in mind with your Reverence, and of interchanging words of brotherly love in Christ with you. Giving you our heartfelt thanks for having sent us your photograph, which we shall preserve as a most valued token of brotherly love, and for the copy of the Scottish Liturgy translated into Greek, and assuring you that we shall keep an unchanged love for you, and shall remember your name in our intercessions to God, we close our letter, praying for your good health, free from pain, and as many years as possible, and happy ones. And may grace and peace and love be multiplied amidst you from God the Father, through the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Holy Ghost!

'In the Holy City, Jerusalem, August 10th, 1885.
'Nicodemus of Jerusalem, and your brother in Christ.'

There is undoubtedly a distinct advance towards Christian unity to-day, and possibly we may yet see Jerusalem take her proper position as the Mother Church in the world. If the Eastern ecclesiastics become learned with the true gospel we may expect much. Attached as we are to our own church we may yet feel a sympathy with the outside world and do our share towards consolidating the force of a right Catholicism. It is a subject which requires to be approached in a spirit, not of party, but of prayer, for God has a great work to accomplish in the East in the immediate future. That work I, for one, feel assured will not be done either on High Church or Low Church lines. I am, sir, yours, X.

Family Reading.

PRAYING AUDIBLY.

In what might be called the subjective influence of prayer—the mission of opening the heart lovingly and trustfully toward God—spoken words are more potent than silent thoughts. A thought gains new power in and by its verbal expression. No thought has so firm a hold on its thinker as it secures through its formal phrasing by him in order that he may make it known to another. Moreover, there are few minds so well trained and so thoroughly disciplined that they can pursue a train of thought consecutively and systematically for a given period of time without any wandering or any interruption, unless they have the aid of the effort required for the formal expression of the successive series of thoughts. Hence he who prays audibly, in the place of secret prayer, gains an added interest in his prayer, and has an added consciousness of the meaning and the measure of his prayer, in comparison with him who simply lets his thoughts run heavenward in prayer.