

received the gift even so minister the same one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." To how many after all will it be a sad Christmas; there will be many who will find it difficult to provide a decent Christmas dinner for themselves and their households on Sunday next. Well let our moderation be known unto all men, let us not be over-extravagant, over-prodigious in our own Christmas joys.

In the third place the apostle strikes a still more serious keynote. He reminds us of the ever impending presence of Christ. "The Lord is at hand." We must be moderate in our joys, moderate in our excitements, for "the Judge standeth at the door."

The "first" Advent must always remind us of the "second" Advent. The world that saw a first coming of Christ will also see a second coming. He who came as a man to suffer and to die will come again to reign. Expectation therefore is a Christmas grace, watchfulness against the time of the second coming, that far-off divine event towards which the whole world moves.

Fourthly, a great Christmas virtue is trustfulness. The season should teach us the lesson of confidence in the unfailing goodness of God. The great gift involves and implies all lesser gifts. "He that spared not His only Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Therefore "be careful for nothing," learn to trust God; "hitherto hath the Lord helped us." "Jehovah-Jireth—the Lord will provide." God fulfils all His promises. How long the Lord waited for the first coming of Christ! but He came just at the right time, not a moment too soon nor a moment too late. "When the fullness of the time was come God sent forth His Son made of a woman." It was the lesson which the divine Master taught us when He was on earth. "Be not over anxious," it is the same word used by the Master and His disciple, "what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink or wherewithal ye shall be clothed, for your heavenly Father knoweth ye have need of all these things." Christmas day should eminently teach us the lesson of trustfulness. How abundantly did God then begin to provide for our spiritual wants! What a wonderful economy of grace did He establish for the purpose, clothing Him in human flesh, taking our nature into the Godhead, manifesting to the universe this marvelous mystery of godliness, exhausting Himself as it were, on our behalf; making Himself of no reputation, taking upon Him the form, the dress, the fashion of a servant, and humbling Himself to the death of the cross! Why should we be over-careful, about earthly things in the presence of this prodigality, this infinite expenditure of divine sympathy and love!

Fifthly, such a Being is worthy of our homage—of our prayers. He is not a God afar off, but a God near to us. How very near to the world did God come when the soft, warm cheek of the Babe of Bethlehem was pressed to His mother's bosom! Therefore we may pray to God with the conviction that God hears us, understands us, sympathises with us. In everything, therefore, by prayer and supplication, we may make our requests known unto God; make Him our confident, the depository of our fears and our sorrows, our hopes and our joys; in *everything*—in all the circumstances of our lives, in bright days as well as in dark days, live in Communion with God, and let our requests be made known unto Him.

And sixthly, we are to do this with thankfulness, out of a full heart. St. Paul is always insisting on the importance of these Eucharists, these givings of thanks in the Christian life, and he himself gives expression to a Christmas thanksgiving when he writes to the Corinthian Christians—"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift!"

Thankfulness should be an element in our Christmas feast; thankfulness to God that we are permitted to celebrate the festival once

more; thankfulness for the great mercy vouchsafed to the world when it saw the birth of Jesus Christ.

And then, as crowning all, the fruit of what has gone before—of joy, moderation, expectancy, trustfulness, prayer, and thanksgiving, will come peace—peace, deep, unutterable, calm, flowing round and encircling and pervading and penetrating the Christian life, the peace of God which passeth all understanding; peace within, peace without, peace in the heart of reconciliation, the peace of gratitude, the peace of heaven, "the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds by Christ Jesus."

May these Christmas graces be ours at this festive time; may our joy be an intelligent joy; and may we take the Babe of Bethlehem to our hearts as our God and Saviour!—*Irish Eccl. Gazette.*

THE LATE MOST REVEREND WILLIAM PIERCY AUSTIN.

LORD BISHOP OF GUIANA.

We have, with deep regret, to announce the death of the Most Rev. William Piercy Austin, who for more than half a century has been Bishop of Guiana and, since 1883, Primate of the West Indies. It was only a few weeks ago that we informed our readers of the universal rejoicing in the colony on the 24th of August last which marked the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Bishop's consecration. Among the services and festivities was a dedicatory service in the new Cathedral, at which the Bishop was present, although his health had been for some weeks such as to give his relations and friends cause for much anxiety. It was evident on that occasion that he was physically extremely feeble. He walked up the aisle very, very slowly, leaning heavily on the shoulder of Canon Heard, and with his arm linked through that of his son. When he reached the chancel his exhaustion, which was painfully evident, awakened the saddest forebodings in the minds of the onlookers. A very simple and touching address, which the Bishop had himself prepared, was read by his son, and was at once an apology for his shortcomings in the past, and an exhortation to his hearers to love one another. His own words were, "As I look back through the long series of years, I cannot but feel how imperfectly that work (*i. e.*, of a Bishop) has been performed, but I pray that the great Master, Whom I have humbly striven to serve, will pardon my shortcomings. Reminding them that the Apostle St. John was the first of those to whom it was granted to hold high office in the Church of God during an unusual length of days, he continued: "To you, beloved, in humble imitation of the Apostle, I now say, "Little children, love one another," and let the love be extended to all Christian people." Such was the closing scene, such the last great public act of the Episcopate which had commenced fifty years previously. No one knows, no one can know, how much the Bishop had looked forward to the completion of the New Cathedral, or how great was the effort which he made to be present on that day. It was the same resolute will which then triumphed over his bodily weakness, that carried him through fifty years of excessive toil in a tropical climate.

William Piercy Austin was a Staffordshire man. He was born at Stone on November 7th, 1807, and was thus rather more than eighty-five years of age at the time of his death. He was educated at Hyde Abbey, Winchester; from thence he went to Exeter College, Oxford, graduated in 1829, was ordained deacon and priest

in 1830 and 1831 respectively. Shortly afterwards he went out to the colony, where his life was to be spent, and in due course became Archdeacon in the diocese of Barbados, which was then one of the two unwieldy bishoprics in the West Indies, founded in 1824, shortly after emancipation, for the especial benefit of the newly enfranchised population. At that time the diocese of Barbados comprised both Windward and Leeward Isles, and British Guiana. In 1842 it was found necessary to subdivide the See. Accordingly, the two new dioceses of Antigua and Guiana were established, and Archdeacon Austin was called to be Bishop of the latter.

It would be impossible in the space at our disposal to give any details of the progress made in all the features which constitute a thoroughly well organized diocese during the time Bishop Austin presided over it. Everywhere in the diocese churches and school chapels have been erected, and mission stations established, missions to aboriginal Indians have been planted on the principal rivers, as well as among the thousands of imported Coolies and Chinese. Day schools have been set up which are being attended by between 11,000 and 12,000 pupils, including those of European, Portuguese, African, East Indian, Chinese, coloured and aboriginal Indian parentage. The extent to which, under the late Bishop, the influence of Christianity has been brought to bear upon the East Indian and Chinese immigrants is remarkable, but much more remarkable is the wonderful way in which the aborigines have been Christianized and civilised. From the first the late Bishop had the welfare of these people very much at heart, and it is only a few months ago that he returned from one of his frequent visitations of the Indian mission stations, during which he camped out, slept in the open, and bore cheerfully discomforts and privations which are inseparable from such a trip, but which a much younger man might fairly have hesitated to face. Such journeys too have risks and perils which tax the energy and endurance of the strongest.

On such trips as those he seldom accepted the services which all alike were eager to render him. If his clothes required washing, he washed them, and there is to our mind not an incident in his long life which shows the true character of the man more beautifully than the following incident, which his chaplain told after a recent visitation among the aborigines. He was missed for some time one evening when they were camping out, and full of anxiety, the members of his party went in search of him, and found him busily engaged in washing his linen. Gently reproached by them, the fine old man excused himself by saying he did not like to trouble them! The dominant rule of his life was consideration for others and lack of consideration for himself.

THE TRUE LIGHT.

BY THE REV. G. C. VEQUERAY, M. A., VICAR OF ALL SAINTS', COVENTRY.

"PAUSE," it has been said, "on the threshold that leads from the three Gospels to the fourth. It is as the passing from the Holy Place to the Holy of Holies."

A Christian who lived at the end of the fourth century (Theodore, of Mopsuestia), and whose writings have been preserved, has handed down to us the following tradition:—"While St. John lived at Ephesus, and visited all parts of Asia Minor, the writings of Matthew, Mark, and Luke came into the hands of the Christians, and were diligently circulated everywhere. Then it occurred to the Christians of Asia Minor that St. John was a far more important witness than all others, inasmuch as even from the beginning, even before Matthew, he was with the Lord and enjoyed more abundant grace through the love