

any change in the Parish, their work may cease. The Sisters have a Charter of their own, which continues; their primary end is the *life*, not the *work*.

And now, with regard to the *inner life* of the Sisterhood. Herein, of course, as in the life of the whole Church, the Holy Eucharist is the centre. The Sisters must continually present themselves before the Lord. "Behold the handmaid of the Lord!" "My soul doth magnify the Lord." In the Eucharist, the Sister must bring all her life and her duties up to Him from Whom all goes forth, and for Whom all works are done. This is the highest power that she can exercise; the source of all her strength. This is the centre of the ordered life of devotion, from which flow out activities and energies for the life of service.

Then, there are her Rules, her recurring hours of Office and Silence; and there is the practice of Meditation, which is a science to be learnt carefully and practised regularly: yet all this must be done in the liberty of the Spirit.

The great difficulty among us at present is to find sufficient *time*, in the midst of pressing work, for Meditation and quiet. Our great desire is to have a reserve supply of workers, so as to enable the needful work to be done, and yet leave the life quiet and calm; and I trust, please God, we may attain to this.

Meanwhile, by Intercession, their ministrations and sympathies expand and reach to every part of the Church; realising the law of the Kingdom: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

I quote, *e. g.* from their Office at Terce,— "the third hour," 9 a. m.,—with its Antiphon: "From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, My Name shall be great among the Gentiles," &c.; and with its Prayer, "that an abundant supply of labourers may be sent," into the different parts of the earth. "Let them not run unless they are sent, nor, when sent, falter in their course," &c.

The Office at mid-day has an intercession for the children under education, with this Antiphon: "Take this child, and nurse it for Me, and I will give thee thy wages;" and this Prayer "Bless, O Lord, we beseech Thee, the children of various ages and degrees whom Thou hast given us to train for Thee. Inspire us, in our work of education, with wisdom, and patience, and love: and upon the children committed to us bestow, we pray Thee, a reverent spirit, an obedient mind, and a loving heart; that, following Thy holy Example, Who didst vouchsafe to be, for us, a little Child, they may grow daily in favour with God and man," &c. These are instances of the carrying out of the principle, that everything should be brought to our Lord, before the Sisters go out, in energy and power, to spend their influence in that department of work which is committed to their trust. Other Offices would show the same thing.

This work has been more than theoretically tried. It may have been done very imperfectly;—and no one knows its weaknesses better than I do;—yet these are the *principles* that we have really set before us, and, moreover, have *practically carried out*, in a "day of small things." And, on the whole, *we have found them answer*. We have tested them, really and practically, in all kinds of work. We have Hospitals, and large Schools for various classes and races, in various places; and thus our work realises the condition of bringing forth the "things new and old" of the Kingdom of Heaven. No life brings a person into contact with more varied forms of human existence than that of a Sister, in a Colony, and in the Mission-field; and by this diversity of experience, the Sisters learn wide sympathies.

Our principles have been tested, not only by the work, and by the life, but also in death; as in the case of one of our Sisters, who came to us quite untrained.

Her whole life as a "Sister" was spent with

us; and now He has satisfied the desire of her heart, to meet her Lord. In her last illness, her thoughts were only of being with her Lord; His for ever. There was great liberty of spirit about her. She went away from all her spiritual privileges at Bloemfontein, to the Diamond Fields; and learnt there, in the wilderness, what it is to lean on the Arm of "the Beloved."

She was quite ready to go; and yet she loved the Home—its order and fellowship and worship—intensely, as a true daughter. She longed to be with her Sisters there, while yet she had that spirit of liberty which could realise that it might be good for her to be thrown entirely upon Jesus Christ Himself.

She is now one of our "living-stones" in Paradise. It is a beautiful saying, that "no Community can be really founded, until one of its members has gone to be a living stone in Paradise." Our principles have therefore not only been tested in life, but have gone through the test of death. It is said, that one must never speak quite confidently of a person, till his death; but these principles helped to carry her through "the valley of the shadow of death," and have been found to bear the test with others also, who have been brought very near to that valley, or have passed beyond it, to the other side.

It is very clear that forces have been put in motion, in these days, which are working upon people's minds with tremendous power. We are creating a great deal of *steam* in our world; a reserve of force, which will need some healthy outlet. If this be not provided, the result will be a "Nemesis" which will shake and startle society. Hence it becomes a necessary duty, for the protection of society, to recognise the manifold vocations in Woman's life and work.

We hear a good deal of "Woman's Rights." We must not forget her grandest, tenderest right, which is, as we have said, to *represent* the Church of the Living God whether it be; as the head of the household, the *wife*, or as the handmaid of the Lord, the *Sister*;—to make known the Wisdom of God, as Man is to represent the Majesty of God, His tender Love and Helpfulness. It is under the figure of "Virgins" that our Lord represents the wise and foolish souls,—Wisdom and Folly;—the foolish Virgins being those who miss, through careless ease, the true end of life;—the wise, those who see it and grasp it; who listen to and obey the Voice of their Lord, as He calls them to follow Him, in *whatever* way, by *whatever* path.

#### DR. LIDDON ON CATECHISING.

Catechising is the first and the most difficult of all the teaching duties of the clergy. It presents so many pitfalls to the prejudiced, the half educated, and the careless that many conscientious parish priests shrink from undertaking it. As may have been noted in a recent controversy, it has its dangers, too, and these do not always consist in over-definiteness of statement. Notwithstanding these risks we seriously think that in no parish ought public catechising in church to be omitted from the Sunday services. Now and again an apology may be required on behalf of some over zealous priest, but the aggregate gain will be immense. We welcome to our table this week a useful little book entitled "Catechising on the Catechism," which is designed to assist the clergy in this task. It is by the Rev. James E. Denison, curate of St. John the Divine, Kennington, and late Vice Principal of Theological College. Messrs. Swan, Sonnenschein & Co., are the publishers. Later on we may subject the book to a careful review, but meanwhile its chief attraction lies in the admirable preface

contributed by Canon Liddon. The best we can do for our readers is to reproduce some striking passages from Dr. Liddon's brilliant sketch of the catechiser and his work. There are two conditions, he says, of good catechising which take precedence of all others:—

The first is, that the teacher should himself have an exact idea of the truth which he has to teach: of its frontiers, its areas, its contents: of the foundation on which it rests; of the errors with which it is contrasted, and which ignore or contradict it; of the inferences which may or may not be drawn from it; of its practical bearings on human thoughts, temper, conduct, motives, life. He has to deposit this truth, thus clearly apprehended by himself, in the mind of a child, and to do this by the use of terms which will not blur or obliterate its outline, while yet they are so simple that a child can understand them. He will not escape the difficulty of his task by throwing what he has to say into the shape of vague generalities; for in that case a child will not understand him at all. The human mind, in its first outlook on thought and life, knows instinctively that all really apprehended truth is definite and that vagueness is a sure sign of ignorance or error. But to be definite and simple when explaining to a child's mind the mysteries of God is a great spiritual accomplishment, which is only reached by much effort, study, and prayer.

No mistake can well be greater than that of supposing that real theological training is of no use to man who is catechising young children. In every subject the power of simple statement is exactly proportioned to the thoroughness with which the subject is grasped; and a catechist never refers to any authorities but texts of Holy Scripture, and he who expresses himself in Saxon words of one or two syllables, will do his work all the better if he is well read in St. Augustine and St. Thomas. Children soon discover whether their teacher is offering them all that he has to say, or whether what he says comes from a richly-stored mind, which has much else in reserve for them by and by. One of the best catechisers in our day was probably the late Rev. W. J. E. Bennett. The present writer well remembers listening to his catechising at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, on Sunday afternoons, in the years 1844, 1845. And one secret of Mr. Bennett's power was the impression which he left on each occasion, that he had a great deal more to say, when the time came for saying it.

The second condition of successful catechising is sympathy; and sympathy with a child implies, on the part of an older person, a two-fold effort of imagination and love. Imagination is needed to realize the mental condition of a human being in the opening years of life,—so different from that of a grown man or woman. And love is still more necessary, not only to quicken the imagination, but to bear the wear and tear of the fatigue and disappointment which all teaching involves, as well as to secure the end and object of all Christian teaching, which is not the bare knowledge of God, but the love of God. The Christian teacher aims at conveying to his pupil the end as well as the substance of the Divine "commandment," and this is not any mere intellectual apprehension of truth, however exact, but "*charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience and faith unfeigned.*" This charity or love, originally "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost Who is given to us," can only be kindled into the flame of any practical power by a soul which is itself aglow with love. A teacher must love our Lord Jesus Christ, and, for His sake, little children, before he can hope to find his way to their hearts by the tender skill of true sympathy. If only he had this vital qualification for his work, he will soon understand the ways and needs of the tender minds which he has to form and teach.—*Family Churchman.*