

to trifle with our language. General and unrestricted

#### INTERCHANGE OF PULPITS.

—and if the thing is allowed at all, it must be allowed without limitation—would argue the abdication by the Church of her office of teacher of the truth, and the abandonment of the idea that there is any truth which must be taught to the people and should be honestly accepted by them. It would be the forerunner of a falling away greater than any that the world has seen. It would be the formal surrender of the claim that ours is an *Ecclesia Docens*, or a Church in any true, historic sense of the term. It would be an invitation to another body—if such there be, and we know that there is, and that it is watching us most attentively—to come in and say to our people: 'That Church which you call your mother has renounced a mother's office and duty; she no longer pretends to teach you; she leaves you exposed to every wind of doctrine; it can no longer be said that she holds a Faith which she takes no pains to guard; come to me, I have a Faith, I have a Creed, in me you shall find again what you have lost.' Such an address, such an appeal, would come, methinks, with irresistible force, to many perplexed and troubled souls. How could we any longer point to our own venerable and still sacred standards, while giving access and a welcome to persons who deny their truth? Supposing a congregation to have minds and brains and consciences, would there not be danger that those consciences might be confused and those brains muddled by the sight of such inconsistency? Would it not be to say in substance: 'Here is the Book of Common Prayer, here are the Creeds, and here are the offices of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion, and here are our Articles declaring the Faith in the Holy Trinity, and the Eternal Generation of the Son of God, and the Union of the two perfect natures in His one Person, and His birth of the Blessed Virgin, and His sacrifice not only for original guilt but for the actual sins of man, and His going down into hell, and His true rising again, with body, flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, and His Ascension into heaven; and further declaring the personality of the Holy Ghost and the authority of the Holy Scriptures, as the Word of God, and the authority of the Nicene Creed, and the doctrines of grace: yes, here are all these; but never mind; we do not really mean it; nor do we care enough about these matters to guard our people from possible impugnments of some or all of these articles of Faith; we allow men to come among us and talk to our people, without any guarantee that they are in accord with the Church, with no official knowledge of their soundness in the Faith; we concede that the voice of the age, as expressed by popular men, outside our lines, may be more edifying, more useful than that of our own duly commissioned teachers.' This, it seems to me, would be a very fair conclusion if the present canonical regulations as to the exercise of the ministerial offices in our congregations were to be repealed; and such repeal would be, for us, to state it simply, the act of suicide.

What I have said to you this evening has been said under the sense of personal responsibility; under the conviction that it ought to be said, by some one, at this time; with great reluctance, but, I trust, without fear. It has said, let me add, and repeat, with the utmost respect for great, able, and holy men in the Christian bodies around us, with the highest admiration for their abilities, and with the most cordial regard for them. But to add one thing more, it has been said with this conviction, that they whom we should first invite to its advocates somewhere in this appalling crowd. Heresies, which died and were buried fifteen hundred years ago, come up again to-day; antichristian principles are inculcated under

Christian terminology; and the effect on the popular mind is to lead men to infer that there is no such thing as truth outside our own thoughts, and that what any man troweth is the truth for him. In this state of affairs we want all the help we can get to keep our flocks steadfast in the Faith. Shall I have the privilege of asking anyone whom I choose to come into the Church and teach the people? I ask it not, nor ought I to have it. Not because the truth is nowhere preached outside our fold. God forbid the thought! We rejoice to note the strong conservative attitude of some of the great Christian bodies around us. We know, and thank God for it, that in many a pulpit around us, there are great Christian preachers who teach

#### THE NICENE FAITH,

this pulpit, if such interchange were permitted, are the very men who will appreciate and understand our attitude, and when they consider it thoughtfully, will say that we, from the standpoint of this Church, do as we ought to do, and feel as we ought to feel; and that they, if in our position, would be doing and feeling as we do. I leave the case in their hands with a confidence which I wish I might as fully repose in some among ourselves. It has been stated as clearly as possible: it presents a grave issue, it touches the claims of the Church at the vital point: I pray you take it to your own hearts; think over it, pray over it, and may God grant, that on this, as on every other great question, we may early be found 'in the same mind and in the same judgment.' —Published in Tract form by E. & J. B. Young & Co., Cooper Union, Fourth Avenue, N. Y.

#### MAY FESTIVALS.

Three great festivals occur in May of this year, namely, Ascension Day, Whitsunday, and Trinity Sunday. Most of our readers know that on Ascension Day the Church celebrates our Lord's return to Heaven, from whence He will come in like manner to judge the living and the dead. Ten days after comes Whitsunday, or the Day of Pentecost, on which we commemorate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Infant Church assembled at Jerusalem. The Sunday after is given to the consideration of the mystery of the Blessed Trinity.

In the Calendar for May of this year we find set down the Rogation Days, which are the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday before Ascension Day, and also the Ember Days, which are the Wednesday, Friday and Saturday after Whitsunday.

The name of Rogation Day is derived from the Latin, and means simply prayer day. According to the best authorities, these days of special devotion were first appointed by Mamertus, Bishop of Vienne, about the year 960, on occasion of the terror and distress occasioned by the last eruption of the volcano of Auvergne. They were afterwards adopted by the whole Western Church as a season of fasting and prayer to God, especially for a prosperous season and good harvest.

The Ember Days occur four times in the course of the year, namely, on the Wednesday, Friday and Saturday after the first Sunday in Lent, after Whitsunday, after the fourteenth of September, and after the thirteenth of December. "They are," says Nelson, "certain days set apart for consecrating to God the four seasons of the year, and for imploring His blessing, by fasting and prayer, upon the ordinations performed in the Church at these seasons." The derivation of the name is uncertain.

The great lesson which these days have to teach us is that of our entire dependence on our Heavenly Father for all good things, both spiritual and temporal. We know how vain are all the labours of the husbandman unless

God shall be pleased to grant the rain and the sunshine in their season; and even more vain are all human wisdom and knowledge to him who is to serve at God's altar unless he shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit from on high. It is to be feared that Christians do not always own or fulfil the duty which is laid upon them of prayer for their spiritual pastors. We are all ready enough to criticise them, to find fault with their style, their address, their way of life; but how much time and thought do we spend in praying for them?

We sometimes hear people say, "I would like to do more for the Church if I were able, but I have neither time nor strength for parish work"; and the excuse is not a vain one. But here is a service, and a most important one, which is in the power of everybody. The busiest man or woman in the church, the invalid who never leaves her room, may help to sustain the pastor by prayer for a blessing on his labors, may bring him comfort in sorrow and discouragement, wisdom in perplexity, and success in winning souls for his Master. It would be a good rule to make to ourselves, never to find fault with our pastor without first praying for him. If Church-members were to follow this rule, I imagine that there would be a great diminution of fault finding, and a corresponding increase of zeal, charity and usefulness.—*Parish Visitor, N. Y.*

#### RESURGAM.

The serious question of the disposition of the dead in crowded populations of late years has brought up afresh much thought concerning the resurrection of the body. Many people are disturbed because they can not understand how a body that has crumbled into dust, or has been turned to ashes, can be restored the same as it was. Though this is certainly possible to omnipotent power, yet is doubtful if the Bible or the Church so affirms. 'Not that body that shall be.' 'But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him.' 'Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body?' And yet, according to chemical science, it is not such an absolute impossibility that the resurrection body should be composed of the same particles of matter as those of the natural body. The great bulk of matter is made up of comparatively few elementary bodies, the chief of which are oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, and carbon. The different substances are due to the different arrangement and combination of the elementary atoms. The orchid, with its delicate grace and charm, and the coarse and unsightly weed, may be composed of the same molecules in different proportion and arrangement. Mother Nature, by her secret and mysterious chemistry, carefully selects the atoms from the surrounding material, and forms out of them the rich red of the rose and the splendid luxuriance of the oak. If God does this in what we call nature, why may we not believe that He will coll. of the particles of matter in the dissolving human body and unite them in that which St. Paul calls the spiritual body. Whether there is any truth in such a speculation or not, it certainly is a comforting and pleasant view to hold, and there is nothing more mysterious or difficult in it than in what we see in the ordinary ongoings of nature. The risen and glorified body, then, is in all essential respects the same, but 'changed'—cleansed of the grossness which adapts it to its environment here—renewed, perfected, and made fit for the environment of heaven, and a sinless, deathless immortality.—*Church News, St. Louis.*

DEATH pays respect neither to youth nor usefulness, but mows down together the tender herb, the fragrant flower, and the noxious weed.—*J. A. James.*