

Rubric which sanctions the use of Vestments shall, under certain circumstances, be regarded as valid. Or, to put the matter practically, that the Bishop of the diocese may sanction the use of the Vestments when the clergymen and the people (congregation or communicants) desire them. Naturally, the suggestion has been variously received—by some with violent opposition, by others with simple acquiescence, by others again, with the thankfulness of relief, by a few with a grudging acknowledgment which indicates that they would like to "ask for more." Some of the suggestions which have sprung out of this proposal will remain for subsequent consideration.

#### LEARN FROM AN ENEMY, OR DON'T.

[COMMUNICATED.]

Most people have probably wished to see a good article upon trite proverbial sayings. There is, at any rate, much room for such an article, because a proverb may be the wisdom of many and the wit of one, yet it is always a curiously misshapen bantling, and it is usually the distortion that has procured it favour. Like the footrule, the proverbs are useful as you use them, but they are not complete repertoires of knowledge, and are dangerous tools unless employed with discretion. How many an argument is clenched by the unassailable statement that *two and two make four*! But there is no necessity in the nature of things for this assumed fact: a tyro in arithmetic knows that they often make twenty-two. We all know how glibly it is said that *even a fool is taught by experience*, but this is only what the fool says, for the wise man knows that a fool learns nothing from experience, and he who is not taught by experience, is always the fool. Now, in the Church work throughout Ontario there is abundant room for our seeking to learn from our enemies, but the practical outcome adopting our means has to be watched with a wise discrimination. We have sometimes studied the Roman methods until we have fallen in love with them, and thought we could do nothing better than import them into our system. But what suited the Roman was found unsuitable for the Anglican, and the wise waited until the strong affection cooled and the weak points were seen. The fashionable *Roman Service of Benediction* is a case in point: it is based on views that are alien to our Book of Common Prayer, yet it evidently excites much religious sympathy and strong emotion. It is very solemn and deeply impressive, but only from a Roman point of view. Extremes meet, and we find again a very solemn and deeply impressive service, which is the cult of the strictly protestant. It is the object of no little ceremonial, and the service is decidedly sensational, but what then, if the end be good! Nothing can be better than sanctifying the new born year, and filling the spiritual being with good resolves and self-dedications for the future. The church therefore appears to have sadly failed of her duty, and forgotten the spiritual interests of her children, in omitting her New Year's Mass! But the wisdom of the Church Catholic is better than the folly both of those who despise her feasts, and of those who neglect them. The protestant denominations of all shades require such times and seasons: they require and they make opportunities for strong personal appeals, and occasions for excited emotions. But the Church has always done her work on a different system, and we do not need to borrow much from the Methodists to supplement our Church's plan. The Church knows nothing of the New Year, but only of this Feast of the Circumcision, with its arrangements for a due celebration of Holy Communion at any respectable time or times in the morning. Is it wise or loyal, then, to substitute the world's romantic phase of thought for the Church's distinct direction? If we shift the celebration from the mystic hour of transition from the Old Year to the New, and ask our friends to crowd the churches at five or even seven in the morning of the New Year's Day, the charm and glamour would be gone and the seats but sparsely filled, yet why the difference? The Church's system is the safest and its results the surest. We must use a very wise and careful discretion in

despising what is our own, and running after our enemy, because his clothing is gaudy, and his gait enchanting. When the Bible and Prayer Book have failed in their object we may look around for some new religious guide; but our old guide ought first to be given a fair trial, and we need not fear but they will stand the test. Even Christianity itself has been condemned as weak by those who have kept outside its influence, and who have learned of it only from its enemies. The Church will meet all comers when she has fair play; but it is not fair first to maim her rites and then to set her aside for a rival,—first to injure and then to insult her.

[We print these notes from a valued contributor, and will gladly insert comments or criticisms upon them. E.D. C. C.]

#### WHAT IRISH CHURCHMEN LOST IN THE PAST AND ARE REGAINING IN THE PRESENT.

The condition of the Irish Church is a matter of profound importance and interest to all sister Churches; and we are thankful to an esteemed correspondent for having drawn our attention to the following article on the above subject in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette*.

1. *The sense that they are Churchmen.* In the past an Irish layman could scarcely give any reason for the faith that was in him as a Churchman. He knew it was his duty to be religious, and go to his parish church, but he knew little more. He had no idea what the corporate life of the Church meant, or why or how he was a member of the body of Christ. His was only one of many religious communities in this country. The great thing was to be a "Protestant," and then it did not matter much whether a man was Churchman, a Methodist, or a Presbyterian. It was respectable, however, to go to church. Least of all was it considered anything to be an *Irish Churchman*, and for the most part Irish Church people put themselves down as members of "the Church of England."

Now all this is changed. We are beginning to understand what it meant by being a Churchman. Our people can stand up better in the face of Wesleyans or Presbyterians and show that theirs is a better way. They have something to say about the "one Catholic and Apostolic Church" in which they profess their belief every Sunday. They are learning more about the Divine authority for Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, as the three-fold form of government to be found from the earliest times in the Church of Christ.

2. *The sense that theirs is the true Catholic Church of Ireland.* They know more about the history of the Church than they did, and of the writings of Irish Churchmen in the past. They are beginning to glory in the ancient lineage of the Church of Ireland, and to feel it to be a privilege to belong to such Church. They better understand what really took place in the sixteenth century, when the Church of Ireland, as represented by the Bishops, accepted the Reformation and conformed to the new Liturgy and canons of the Church, abandoning the errors that up to that time had increased in the Church. They understand that the Archbishops and Bishops of to-day hold their respective Sees in unbroken succession from the Archbishops and Bishops of the Reformation period, and that, holding the doctrines which St. Patrick preached, as is clearly shown by his writings, the Church of Ireland to-day is the only true representative of the Catholic and Apostolic Church found in this country in the fifth century.

3. *Their Church privileges.* (a) Their right to bright and hearty services. Time was when Irish Churchmen were content with the high and dry, or the low and slow. The church buildings were for the most part mean, poor, dirty, unkempt places of worship. They were disgraced by their white-washed walls, cold and damp and mildewed, their staring windows, their square uncomfortable pews, their neglected churchyards outside. Tait and Brady then did duty for psalmody, occasionally eked out by a hand organ or a poor harmonium or a pitch-pipe. The duet between the parson and the clerk underneath the three-decker was the only semblance of an attempt at the responses. Now all this is changed, and everywhere Church people

have wakened up to the necessity of bright and hearty services, with good singing, frequently led by surpliced choirs, in comfortable and attractive churches, ecclesiastically arranged.

(b) Their right to frequent services. The laity have begun to ask the question why their houses of worship should be shut up all the week and only opened on Sundays, as if the God they worship was only a Sunday God, and not to be worshipped and invoked in prayer every day of our lives. Time was when the parish church was closely barred and shut up every Sunday night, not to be unbarred and opened again until the following Sunday morning, the voice of public (or parochial) prayer and praise being hushed during the intervening six days of the week.

(c) Their right to a weekly communion, or the apostolic breaking of bread on the first day of the week, when the disciples are assembled together, so that whoever is hungering for the Bread of Life and desires to feed on his Lord in His own holy ordinance, and show forth His precious sufferings and death, may do so at the Table provided for him.

(d) Their right to keep those Holy days or Fast-days set apart by the Church and ordered to be observed, and for which the Church has provided special Lessons, with Collects, Epistles, and Gospels—by having the churches opened for the purpose, and the prayers said therein on those days.

(e) Their right to go to their minister and unburthen their grief to him before they come to the Holy Communion, if their be any who cannot otherwise quiet their own conscience by private prayer and meditation, and require further comfort and counsel, so as to get rid of all scruple and doubtfulness.

(f) Their right to have their children reverently baptized during Divine service, so that they may have the great benefit of the prayers of the congregation then present, and not have them baptized in a hole-and-corner way, as if they were ashamed of the Lord's Sacrament, or did not believe in its efficacy.

4. *Their sense of the value of the Church as something worth supporting.* Time was when the Church leaned on the State for everything. It was the State or "Established" Church. The clergy were paid by tithes, and afterwards by rentcharge, levied by Act of Parliament. If a bell-rope were required, or a new Prayer Book or Bible, or a brush, or a duster, it was provided out of funds at the disposal of the Church Commissioners, and practically the laity were asked to give nothing to the support of the Church. Now Irish Churchmen entirely support their Church, and are feeling it more and more a privilege to do so. The stipends of the clergy, the salaries of organist, sexton, grave-digger, bell-ringer etc., the coal, the gas, the candles, that heat and light the church, the repairs of the sacred edifice—all these things are provided out of the free-will offerings of Church people, and because they thus give they are valuing the Church, and taking an interest in it that they never did before. Irish Churchmen have given since the separation of the Church from the State more than three-and-a-half millions for Church sustentation purposes only. As much more might be said to have been expended on Church buildings and restoration within the same period.

5. We mention one thing more that Irish Churchmen lost in the past, and are regaining in the present—the sense of Fatherhood of God. Time was when the spirit of a cold, joyless, Puritanism or Calvinism lay heavy on the heart of the Irish Churchman. Men were taught to believe in the dreary tenets of John Calvin, an able Swiss lawyer, who elaborated out of his own brain a system of theology unheard of before, wonderfully logical and coherent throughout, but which had no truth in it. It was to many a religion of despair or else of indifference. It paralysed the heart's affections, and made men either fear or hate God, but scarcely love Him. Every congregation was divided by it into the elect and the non-elect, the saved and the unsaved, the children of God and the children of the devil, with the result of secret unbelief and indifference. The means of grace were neglected, because it was thought that nothing could alter the Divine decrees. Men went to church because their wives and daughters went. Calvinism suited the unreasoning faculty of women who believed