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FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

(January 30th.)

Holy Communion: 242, 254, 260, 262.

Processional: 376, 386, 397, 482.

Offertory: 324, 327, 485, 489.

Children: 92, 386, 389, 479.

General: 94, 340, 394, 399.

The Outlook

Epiphany and Missions.

The Epiphany Appeal, Sermons and the canvass now being made in our churches afford a fresh opportunity of considering the great work of world-wide evangelization. For this purpose we intend to give our readers the opportunity of studying various aspects of the missionary problem during the next two or three weeks. We ought to be able to know why we engage in this work and the various motives and reasons which prompt it. No one can doubt that among the first and finest testimonies to the reality of our Christianity is the missionary spirit.

Recovery and Retreat.

It is unutterably sad to read that the London Missionary Society, one of the best-known and most powerful societies now at work, is faced with a large deficiency, and the Committee feels compelled to reduce expenditure to so great an extent as to involve the entire closing down of its Mission in the city of Calcutta, with twelve European missionaries, important schools and teacher training work. Another Indian Mission involving a large staff is also to go, while extensive relinquishments are proposed in New Guinea and the South Seas, sacrificing some of the work of great pioneers, like Williams, Chalmers and others. This retreat will be found absolutely necessary unless there is a sufficient increase of income before the end of January, and it is felt that the problem is at root a spiritual one, for the challenge of the present missionary situation ought to become a means of religious revival. And so this valuable Society is faced with the pressing problem of recovery or retreat, and the words of the Committee carry home to us all at this Epiphany Season the solemn lesson: "Recovery may mean sacrifice; retreat must mean humiliation and disgrace."

Spiritual Revival.

Two men standing at opposite extremes in theology have written about revivals. Jonathan Edwards believed that revivals come as an act of divine grace and are entirely beyond human power. Finney insisted that they come out of the preparation of the Church, and that the Church can, therefore, have a revival at any time. These two writers represent two types of thought which still exist. There are those who think that we must wait for the wind that bloweth as it listeth. There are others who think that faith, prayer and effort can command revival. Thus Finney has set forth the laws of revival under six conditions and says that we may expect a revival:—

(1) When the Providence of God indicates that revival is at hand. And this He indicates to souls that are prepared.

(2) When the wickedness of the wicked grieves, humbles, and distresses Christians.

(3) When Christians have a spirit of prayer definitely for a revival.

(4) When the attention of ministers and their consequent efforts are directed to this particular object.

(5) When Christians begin to confess their sins to one another.

(6) Every revival is under the sign of the Cross. When ministers and professors are willing, and if God permit it, by what instrument He pleases.

The truth is doubtless found in both these views taken together, for revival is at once due to divine grace and is a response to human effort. God sends the floods, but man makes the preparation for the coming of the water. Scripture abounds in proof of this two-fold element of divine sovereignty and human freedom and there is no real contradiction between them. The divine side must always be emphasized first, but it is then essential to lay stress on the human conditions of blessing. And if only the people of God set themselves to prayer, trust, study of scripture and waiting upon God, He will soon provide the blessing beyond all that we ask or think.

Canada's Part in the War.

The part that Canada is taking in this war has been noted with praise by many newspapers in the United States. One New York paper reads as follows:—

"Whatever sneers may be directed against Great Britain's moral pretensions, or however plausibly it may be said that England, animated by nationalistic fears, is in the war from essentially the same motives that animate Germany, it is difficult for even the most cynical to withhold whole-hearted recognition of the high morality back of Canadian action. She is not fighting for herself. She is and has been in no material danger. The break-up of the British Empire would not affect her prosperity. Her participation is altruistic to the verge of knight errantry. She is testifying in the most practical ways in behalf of what she regards as supreme righteousness."

This is at once interesting and encouraging, even though it is capable of a little more accurate statement. There is a sense in which Canada is fighting for herself, for while up to the present there has been no material danger, it is beyond question that a German victory would so affect Canada's position as to make life here altogether different, even though it might not in the long run affect prosperity. But as there is practically no fear of any such disaster, the statement is true

that Canada is testifying in practical ways in support of what we all regard as righteousness and liberty. This is no ordinary war, but one that is involving the very foundations of true life, and it is the consciousness of this that has rallied every part of the British Empire with such determination.

Church Union in Canada.

The results of the poll of the Presbyterian Church towards a Union with the Methodists and Congregationalists remove all present hope of seeing that Union realized, for while a large majority is in favour of it, the minority is too great to be ignored. Some years ago a similar canvass resulted in favour of Union by about three to one, and as the Congregationalists and Methodists were at that time almost unanimous, the hopes of Union seemed bright and strong. But the recent results have proved a great disappointment to those who advocate Union, and the Presbyterian Church is clearly much too evenly divided on the subject to act at all. Many who are in favour of Union regard this as melancholy and distressful, though it must also be admitted that there are many more who are in hearty sympathy with Union but who do not endorse the present proposals, and this very largely on doctrinal grounds. We of the Anglican Church naturally look with interest at all these movements, because we are certain that every tendency towards Union should be encouraged as far as possible. And yet the fact that so many thoughtful men are not satisfied with the proposed terms of Union compels a fresh consideration of the whole subject. It is no question of mere narrowness on the one side or undue liberality on the other. Both sides must be recognized as sincere in their convictions, and so, with further consideration all round, it is devoutly to be hoped that before long some steps will be taken to prevent the present overlapping in the West and in other ways also to show the power and blessedness of those who are fulfilling our Lord's purpose "that they all may be one."

Conference on Unity.

A Conference held at Garden City, Long Island, in the United States, a few days ago had as its object certain preparatory considerations prior to the universal Conference on Faith and Order. The delegates heard a letter read from Cardinal Gasparri, Papal Secretary of State, conveying the deep interest of the Pope in the proposed Conference. The letter was marked by a delightful spirit, even though it was necessarily couched in very general terms. The Conference seems to have been impressed with this letter, and in response to a request for permission to give it publicity the Pope replied by saying, among other things, the following:—

The aid and earnest prayers of the Roman Pontiff will never be lacking to anyone who, having freed himself from prejudiced opinions, with a true and sincere will strives with all his strength, that the unity of faith and fellowship instituted by Christ and built upon Peter may be restored, and that all who are enrolled in the name of Christian may betake themselves to the bosom of the one most loving Church and may be joined and associated as members with Christ the head.

It will be seen from this latter communication that generalities are avoided and Unity is plainly stated to be associated with the Roman Catholic Church. We hope the delegates at the Conference were duly impressed by this polite and yet frank statement, and if they were satisfied with it there is nothing

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