

raison d'être for orders, and a recognition and an exercise of authority?

PRO BONO ECCLESIE.

The Poor Widow to Suffer.

SIR.—Permit me to open my mouth in parable. A certain man had a large tract of wild land which he wished to reclaim, and as he could not do all himself, he hired a number of labourers whom he instructed; in this way the land was brought under cultivation and made productive. In course of time some of the hands died, and left widows, and the master said to the remainder: "My fellow toilers, we be brethren, and these belong to the farm, and are dependent henceforth on us; say, shall we make provision for these widows, and make their support a first charge on our resources?" And they agreed thereto, and year by year the old men dropped off and younger men were engaged, and last of all the master died also. Then the young men began to say among themselves: "These widows are a sore burden and our wants are many; they cannot longer be a just charge, but be content with what is left." And the steward who had charge of the stores remonstrated and said, "we have made a covenant with our deceased brethren," but the younger men heeded not. The steward asked for the widows' share. But the young men answered, "we wish you to take charge of more." And he said, "nay, my brethren, we have not for those now on," and the young men answered, "how does that concern us—see thou to that." Then the master made a rule: "Until these our widows are provided for, naught shall be sent from off this land. We must first provide for our own family."

ECONOMY.

"What are the Duties of Rural Deans?"

SIR.—The letter of "Churchman" in your issue of Aug. 23rd, is a well timed one—as this matter should be brought more prominently before the eyes of the Church authorities. The question, "What are the duties of Rural Deans" is a vital one, but unfortunately not defined in the Canons of our Church. They are first the subordinate officers of the Bishops, and their duties to see that Church work in their deaneries should not lag. They should at the invitation of any clergyman visit the parish and assist in raising his stipend when necessary; preside at deanery meetings, and see that every parish in the deanery is supplied with the ministrations of the Church. At the present time rural deans only carry the name of their office, in other words are mere figure heads. Their duties should be defined as follows: 1st. To make an annual visit to every parish in the deanery. 2nd. To see that churches and parsonages are in good order. 3rd. To examine parish registers and service books. 4th. To find out whether Church work on distinctive Church lines is carried on. If any of these things are omitted or neglected, then it shall be the duty of the rural dean to report to the Bishop of the diocese, who shall then fully enquire into the matter.

ANOTHER CHURCHMAN.

Aug. 24th, 1894.

Scripture Interpretation.

SIR.—Scripture interpretation is not always the dry study that some represent it, but gives points which at times excite a healthy interest. Thus there are two phrases in the Parable of the Good Samaritan on which I should like to see a little more light thrown. (1.) Regarding both the priest and the Levite we read that they "passed by on the other side." Can anyone tell me whence, how and when the phrase "on the other side" came into the English translation? Was there any motive in it in order to throw a special slur upon the priest and the Levite? I have examined the few versions within my reach, and the English is the only one that suggests this idea. The Greek gives the picture of their passing by in front of where the man was lying unconscious, and then their giving an extra lash to their mules or asses to take them out of danger from the banditti. In the narrow roads of Palestine the going to "the other side" would not be necessary, and the suggestion by the translators appears to be only a severer hit at the priests and Levites for their inhumanity.

(2.) We read that the Samaritan took up the traveller and "set him on his own beast." This is a fair translation of the original Greek, but it does not answer the question, whose beast? Trench and Edersheim probably voice the common opinion, that the beast was that of the Samaritan, and that the Samaritan walked alongside until they came to the nearest inn or khan. From Wordsworth (on the passage) we must infer that this was an early view in the Church, and used for mystical interpretation. But as to the matter of fact, what would our Lord most naturally have in His mind regarding it? I have no doubt but He had in His mind's eye, as He presented the parable, the picture of the Samaritan

leaping off his own beast, doing all he could for the wounded man, and then going away for the man's mule or ass, which was grazing at no great distance. Remounting the man in his accustomed saddle, and seating himself upon his own beast, the Samaritan led off with all expedition to get away from the dangerous neighbourhood. Neither the time nor the place was one for unnecessary delay. The place was known to be dangerous, and the country was full of sicarii, bandits, robbers or thieves, of whom we probably find two on their crosses with Jesus. A walk on foot was scarcely for those times, and we are not told about the distance from the inn or the roughness of the road. This appears to me to be the most natural way of looking at the matter, and the ambiguity of the original Greek is acknowledged. Can any one suggest a more conclusive argument for either interpretation? It is a case where opinion is free, and there is no fear of an indictment for heresy.

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A Church Snag.

SIR.—I was recently stopping at a certain town on the Georgian Bay, and on Sunday morning I wended my way to church. Being a little too early, I was standing at one of the church doors when my attention was drawn to a framed notice in the porch. It was to the effect that "Newcomers to the parish, and other members of the congregation, who are desirous of being visited by the clergyman, will please write a memorandum of their names and addresses, and put the same in the box below this." I wondered how such a notice had worked and was working, especially as there was no box; but my curiosity was oddly enough satisfied before long, as the clergyman prefaced his sermon by alluding to it. He stated that for seven years not a single name had been dropped in the box, and that during the next three years only two persons had done so; and he alluded to the experience of a brother clergyman who was once invited, through a similar box, to call upon a stranger at the extreme end of his parish, and on calling at the house he discovered that a fictitious name had been given. He then urged the members of the congregation to show a little more attention and courtesy both to each other and to strangers; not to stand aloof from each other because they were not all on the same social level, for that no gentleman or gentlewoman—very different beings, by the way, from those who have the names of gentleman and lady indiscriminately bestowed upon them—would consider it as beneath them to recognise, in a kindly and sympathetic manner, even the humblest of their co-worshippers. In connection with this he instanced the case of an old man, of very humble rank, who had sat in that very church for thirty years, and to whom, during all that time, not one of the congregation had ever spoken. As a contrast to this, he quoted a few remarks made by the ex-Premier of England, who, when a young man, had gone to a Nonconformist church, had been at once shown into a good seat, had been waited for and accompanied on his way back to his hotel by two of the congregation who asked him for his name and address, and who generally extended to him the right hand of fellowship. In mentioning this incident, His Lordship said that, if the members of the Church of England acted in the same spirit, their Church would undoubtedly occupy that prominent position to which it was entitled. Both these examples could be multiplied from the experiences of scores of persons who have, through similar causes and from similar reasons, been induced to leave the Church of their fathers, and the one in which they themselves had been brought up, but which on settling in this country they have left because of the coldness and want of sympathy shown them as strangers. It is owing to this, more than to anything else, that the Church of England in Canada makes less progress than does any other Church; and it will never take that place among the Churches of this country unless and until the various members come to regard each other as brethren—brethren equal in the sight of God, none higher and none lower while in the house of God, worshipping one Father with one heart and one mind.

A. BISSET THOM.

More Bishops.

SIR.—It is very awkward to find oneself referred to by three different names in one issue of a paper. This is the position I find myself in, and in order to pull myself out of the tangle I will preface this letter by saying that I am "Episcopalian," "Diaconalian" and "Layman" of Collingwood.

First allow me to reply to "Anglican" on "More Bishops." When I said that Bishops have power to make their influence felt, I said it because, as I stated in my letter of 14th June, it is my opinion that "a Bishop has, from the mere fact of being a Bishop, not only the influence of his dignity, but the actual authority to rule his people," and I repeat:

Read the Consecration Service, where this is taken for granted. In fact I repeat the whole of my letter. I know, of course, that in these degenerate times the Bishops are unable to exercise the authority inherent in their order, but Churchmen ought to see that the clergy are given their proper freedom. In the meantime I suppose that a Bishop's authority cannot extend much beyond moral suasion. Of course moral suasion is of very great benefit, and I do not think that, even if a Bishop had absolute power, we should consider him right in ruling with a rod of iron. He would rather have more influence in the long run if he tried a little moral suasion. He would, however, be obliged to draw the line somewhere. At the present time the Bishops do not try moral suasion, and I suppose the great reason is that they have not time owing to the immense size of the Canadian dioceses. Therefore we need more Bishops. If we had archdeacons who would do what archdeacons are supposed to do, things would not be so bad, but so far as I can see "Archdeacon" is a mere empty title. It is not folly at all to expect better results from having more Bishops. As a lay Churchman I have more confidence in our clergy. "Anglican" says it is a debatable point whether Bishops would use this moral suasion, as few would care to expose their impotency. There is a little truth in this, because Bishops, as I have said above, are handicapped, but I think "Anglican" confounds "moral suasion" with disciplinary measures. No one could expose his impotency by using moral suasion. When I said we only had one order and a half, I did mean pretty much what "Anglican" says. I say we only have half an order of Bishops. We never experience their influence or their authority. "Anglican's" remark that Bishops have not the power of cancelling, and that this defect is a deadly canker, is most timely and appropriate. I must correct "Anglican" when he says a Bishop is powerless in cases of more apathy than the one I described. If the dioceses were smaller the Bishops would notice the first symptoms of disease and step in with "moral suasion" before it became incurable. I take this opportunity of repeating that we practically have not three orders, as we have no deacons. We have one or two deacons here and there, but there certainly is not an order of them. I am glad "Anglican Churchman" approved of my letter in the Mail. I do not believe in bringing up these things in the secular press, but it is the only way to do if we want our letters to be read by all. Since I wrote these letters I find that we have at least one most admirable bond of unity, which I understand we have in a great measure to thank Provost Body for, I mean the unity of the Divinity Degrees; I think this a grand step. It does seem so lamentable that there are so many rivals of the Church institutions. It seems a shame that all these institutions have received official approval, when we ought to be loyal and unite to build up the Church and her institutions and not go in for the "side shows." We are too poor in Canada for this kind of rivalry. What seems to me the most wicked rival of all, and shows what we may expect if we do not rouse ourselves, is the new Missionary Society. In Canada the Church is as she ought to be (and in fact is so essentially), a missionary society, and for some people to start a rival, unsanctioned and even denounced by the proper authority, is scandalous. I was reading a few days ago Bacon's essay "On unity in Religion," with Whately's annotations thereon, and I think it most appropriate for the present times. I wish all could and would read it. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love Thee." N. C. E.

Family Reading.

Two Faces.

Sweet face of childhood—
Thou lookest out on life with trusting eyes,
Unknowing yet the awful mysteries
Of sin and sorrow, want and grief and pain,
For thine is perfect innocence.
Yet some day thou shalt know the pain of life,
And all its stern and hard realities—
God shield thee when that searching day shall come!

Sweet face of age—
Thou lookest out on life full trustingly;
Yet thou hast known the darkest mysteries
Which compass and ensnare the souls of men.
For thou regardest all the woes of life
As but the blows which call the statue forth
From out the marble: thou hast learned
The fire consumes the dross, refines the gold.
And thou hast found at last behind it all
Infinite love and wisdom infinite,
Till now thou standest face to face with God.

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