

The Body of Christ.

St. Paul thus speaks of the Church: he calls it the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ was the manifestation of Christ to the senses—as St. John expresses it, "That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled." The Church, then, is the visible manifestation of Christ; wherever the Church is, Christ is manifest. But how? The main point emerges quite clearly and forcibly as soon as one deals simply and literally with the Scriptures.

When Jesus walked the streets of Jerusalem, or the shores of Gennesareth, the people knew where to find Him. They could bring to him all their sorrows, hopes, sins and aspirations, sure of some clear and audible response.

While He was there before them there could be no question about His presence or about His words. He was with them. They could always appeal to Him.

But at His Ascension His bodily presence was visibly removed. The comforting definiteness of the testimony of the senses was lost. And this loss was a great one, constituted as men are. But He promised a return of Himself with greater power than ever, and an immediate return. But how a return to the senses? How can men again hear Him? see Him? appeal to Him?

Take St. Paul's words, then, simply and literally, *The Church is the Body of Christ.*

This truth, then, emerges: the Church supplies the place of the absent Body of Christ. It makes up, so to speak, the lack of His visible presence. It becomes to Christians now that which His Body was to the first disciples.

The constitution and history of the Catholic Church have always proceeded upon this truth. Our Lord Himself gave to it the very prerogatives of His own bodily presence. He gave it, e. g., the authority to judge and settle disputes between brethren. If brethren disagreed, they were to be brought before the Church, and the Church's decision is final.

The Church has always claimed to be the tongue of Christ, to utter words of absolution or pronounce condemnation, to preach the Gospel, to counsel and advise in His name—the feet of Christ, to carry the Gospel out even unto the ends of the earth—the hands of Christ, to break the Bread, and bless the Cup, to baptize, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked—the heart of Christ, beating with affection and desire towards all humanity. In short, the Church gives to the words and work of Christ all that definiteness, decision, visibleness, which were so necessary in the days of the Apostles, and which are not less necessary now.

No wonder that with such a conception of the Church, Christian men learn to love, to obey, to cherish and to revere it.

Editorial Notes.

It is reported that the narrowness of the majority by which the late vote of censure was defeated in the Imperial House of Commons will possibly lead to the resignation of the Government. However this may be, there can be little doubt that the reign of Mr. Gladstone is drawing near its end, and there is too much reason to fear that the political star of this great statesman will set in a dark cloud. It is not difficult to discover the

causes of this too probable close of a great career; they are to be found partly in Mr. Gladstone's own mental constitution, and still more, perhaps, in the unfortunate course of events through which he has been latterly called to steer the ship of state. That he is a man of extraordinary genius, and of unrivalled versatility of powers, combined, as is rarely the case, with great practical ability, must be conceded by his most bitter political foes; and the loftiness of his moral aims will be disputed by none but the most prejudiced critics. Still, we fear it must be confessed that, as the Prime Minister and virtual ruler of a great nation in troublous times, he has proved a failure. An Empire torn by internecine strife, and harassed by inglorious and unprofitable wars abroad, constitutes the legacy which he will leave to his successor. Two features in Mr. Gladstone's mental constitution go very far, in our opinion, to explain the defects of his administration, viz., an inability to see at once into the heart of a subject, leading to vacillation and procrastination when decision and promptitude are above all other things necessary; and a conviction of the infallibility of his own judgment, which causes him to adhere to an opinion, when once formed, with a degree of tenacity amounting to obstinacy. Those who have attentively watched his public career will have no difficulty in finding abundant illustration of these two traits of character. It is only just to add that the circumstances under which Mr. Gladstone entered upon his last lease of power, were circumstances of almost unparalleled difficulty, and that for these he was in no way responsible. That he has grappled with the perplexing problems of the day with a conscientiousness as rare as it is praiseworthy, only increases our regret that he has not been able to meet them with a clearer insight and a firmer hand.

We are receiving gratifying evidence from all directions that the season of Lent is more generally observed and consequently, better appreciated, year by year. Churchmen of all shades of churchmanship vie with each other in the frequency of their Lenten services, and the earnestness of their Lenten appeals. Even our "separated brethren" have caught the wholesome infection; and we read of Ash Wednesday services in Presbyterian and Methodist sanctuaries. We hail with thankfulness and joy these signs of the general desire throughout Christendom to return to the good old paths "where the saints have trod."

The secular papers have given currency to certain "rumors" concerning the appointment of a successor to the Rev. Dr. Louley, in the Principalship of the University of Bishops' College. We know not what foundation there may be for these reports, but if they prove to be correct, their confirmation will be a cause for hearty congratulation on the part of all the friends of church education in the Province of Quebec.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CLERGY HOUSE,
MOOSOMIN, Feb. 14, '85.

To the Editor of THE CHURCH GUARDIAN.

DEAR SIR,—May I ask you to insert an appeal from the Church people in this town and district? We propose opening a circulating library (a much needed work, and one which will be very beneficial to the settlers). We have few books up here, but

there must surely be a large number of most suitable books amongst the book lovers of Canada. Can such not spare even a small parcel of such for us? We want good, sound and lively books—truth or fiction—prose or poetry—so as to suit all parties. Brethren, help us.

Yours faithfully, W. W. BOLTON,
Mission Priest in charge.

To the Editor of THE CHURCH GUARDIAN.

Having just returned from a trip, as a deputation on behalf of the Mission Fund, through the Upper Ottawa Mission—known officially as the "Mission of Clara"—I send a few notes in the hope of interesting some of your readers in the work which is being carried on there. The mission extends over about 150 miles of territory—from Chalk River, 20 miles above Pembroke, to Sturgeon Falls, on the north shore of Lake Nipissing. This country has been opened up by the onward march of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and it is encouraging to find that as the railway has advanced, so has the Church. The present headquarters of the mission is at Mattawa, where a brick church and parsonage have been erected. Churches have also been built at Sturgeon Falls and North Bay, and regular services are held by the missionary, the Rev. C. V. Forster Bliss, and his two lay assistants, one of whom, G. J. Schrader, Esq., is shortly to be ordained. North Bay, where the Railway Company have large shops, is likely to become a thriving place. It is beautifully situated on the shore of Lake Nipissing, and will probably be before long a popular summer resort. An hotel for the accommodation of tourists is soon to be built, and will no doubt be well patronized, as the place offers the varied attractions of boating, excellent fishing, and picturesque scenery. The Church is well to the front here, having more attendants than any other religious body, and the congregation is rapidly increasing—so rapidly that the pretty little church which has been built during the last year will probably soon have to give place to a larger and more substantial erection. I spent a whole Sunday here; the morning service, consisting of matins and celebration, with sermon by Mr. Schrader, was well attended, while at the missionary meeting in the evening there was a large congregation and an excellent collection. At Sturgeon Falls the missionary meeting was held on Friday evening, and though but a tiny settlement in the woods, no less a sum than \$14 was given, a most liberal offering, and one that ought to arouse to better things in the future many a parish in the front, where scanty contributions are put to shame by these dwellers in the back woods. At Chalk River, too, there were excellent collections, and altogether \$43 were brought back from this one mission; an amount which will probably be increased by another meeting which has yet to be held in its bounds, but had to be postponed for a few weeks. It is impossible to speak too highly of the work which Mr. Bliss is carrying on, a work deserving the fullest and most ungrudging support of those that have it in their power to help him. He hopes to build two more churches in the approaching season, one at Chalk River and one at Lake Tallore. The people will do all they can themselves, but they are poor and cannot give much, so that a great deal of outside assistance is absolutely necessary. I would be very glad if this short account of his field of labor should induce any to send him subscriptions, and to those who are fond of travel and of seeing wild and picturesque scenery, I would suggest that they should visit that part of the country themselves next summer, and see how the Church is progressing under his superintendence, and how much he can do if only the means, the sinews of war, are supplied to him.

A. F. ECHLIN.

ARNPRIOR, Feb. 20th, 1885.

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