

scriptive right, were setting up a spiritual tyranny, miscalled a Church, as arbitrary as that of Rome."

Thus we see the claims that the Church of England has to the allegiance of every soul in England. Her ministrations are open to all. She is a true branch of the Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ. She is orthodox. Her Articles, Homilies and Prayer Book exalt the Holy Scriptures. She proclaims their supreme authority in matters of faith. She holds no doctrine but those which were held from the beginning by all true branches of the orthodox Church of Christ. She exalts the Saviour and teaches with no uncertain sound that His atonement is the only hope of sinners. She teaches the universal Fatherhood of God, and the work of the Holy Spirit in making souls meet for the company of that Father's home. She reveres the Creeds, which were composed when the Church was one, and taught no error, for they can be proved by Holy Scriptures to be true. She reveres, likewise, the decrees of the councils of the first ages of the Church for the same reasons. Truly she claims, and ought to claim, the allegiance of every true soul in England. She is a witness against error in other branches of the Church. She is "the pillar and the ground of the truth."

Church of God! if we forget thee
Let His blessing fail our hand,
When our love shall not prefer thee,
Let His love forget our land!

* * * * *
Church of Jesus! His thy banner,
And thy banner's awful sign:
By His passion and His glory,
Thou art His, and He is thine.
* * * * *

Yea, thou Church of God the Spirit!
His Society Divine,
His the living word thou keepst,
His the Apostolic line.
Ancient prayer and song liturgic,
Creeds that change not to the end,
As His gift we have received them,
As His charge we will defend.

THE LENTEN FAST.

BY THE RT. REV. F. L. HUNTINGTON, BISHOP OF
CENTRAL NEW YORK.

We are not to look on this appointment of a penitential season as an arrangement of our own. It is rather a sacred part of that divinely ordained system of spiritual ministries by which the Lord quickens the conscience and trains the holy life of His children. Traces of such a solemnity of forty days' continuance are found all along through the earlier ages of Revelation. We know that it was the discipline of Prophets the reverential school of saints who lived wonderfully near to God. Entering once more upon it we have not to contrive a scheme of self-improvement without the guidance of the Spirit and the Bride. He who hallowed Lent by the great fast on the threshold of His mediatorial work for sinful souls passes into this still retirement with us. All these coming days, and nights He will be our witness and our companion. The sincerity or formality of our special observances will be known to Him. Our self-denials He will share. The vows we make will be recorded in His book of remembrance. As the Gospel for last Sunday told us, "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." The cry of our blindness and our weakness will not need to travel far to reach His ear, nor will He ever rebuke it, either for its ignorance or its importunity. It is with Him we are to walk all the way going up to Jerusalem.

Coming once more to the beginning of this gracious period we ought, first of all, to put

away all superficial thoughts and all flippan-conventional language about it. Do not trust to vague general intentions;—in the observance they will come to nothing, leaving only ashes in your mouth. Have a plan which you are not ashamed to own, and which you will probably be able to carry steadily through. So far as all arrangements of time, place and household are at your command, without wronging or disobliging others, make them yield to that plan. It is of less importance just what form your self-denial takes, than that it take some distinct form which you can define and present to your own mind. See that the cross is really laid on somewhere. Nothing that you cut off from self-gratification for your Savior's sake will you ever regret or wish to take back. Choose out, if you can, the weakest point. There is appetite in its several importunities; there is the passion for dress; there is idleness; there is the sin of evil speaking, in fact, all the foul brood of the transgressions of the tongue; there is bad temper; there is the lack of courage in manifesting your Christian convictions and bearing open witness; there is the hurrying or forgetfulness of prayers; there is too little intercession; there is idolatry of the objects of human love; there is pride; there is self-seeking or self-pleading that creeps even into your works of charity. Sprinkle the ashes where the moral deformity or disorder is most cunningly concealed, 'that the flesh of the inner man may come again like the flesh of a little child. Dismiss at once from the mind, and keep out of it, any notion that your sacrifices or repentances are to be reckoned to you as merits, or can furnish any ground for justification. They are meant to bring your soul into that repentant, lowly, and teachable frame, where He who alone justifieth can set His healing and redeeming power more faithfully at work. They cleanse the vision; they open the door; they drive the tempter away, inviting in that heavenly Guest who stands now and knocks with patient solicitation, and who, once bidden by a sorrowing and self-renouncing faith to come in, abideth ever.—*The North East.*

LENT SERVICES FOR MEN.

'How can we reach the men?' is a question often asked at convocation and clerical meetings. It may be difficult to answer satisfactorily; but 'How not to reach the men,' is a very plain problem. We have simply to *continue to do as we are now doing*—to continue to call at such hours as men are never at home, to appoint our Lenten and week-day services at such times as the women only can attend, and to continue to address our sermons mainly or wholly to women and children.

There is only way to reach men, and that is the way we reach everything else, by going after them; or, better yet, by sending a layman with sanctified common sense after them, and devoting our time to preparing a manly address on masculine duty.

'But they won't come.' That is what most all the male communicants (the very ones whose duty it is to 'compel them to come') said to us, when we asked, 'Which is the best hour for a Lent service for men?' We replied, 'A service for men *will be held*; what we want to know is the best hour for holding it. 'What time do most business men start for dinner?' 'About twelve o'clock.' 'The service, then, is at twelve o'clock, sharp, and you shall be out and at home by 12.30.'

The service must be arranged for men only. It must be prompt to the minute, brief, pointed, decided, hot with earnestness. The address must be the same, with a decided grasp of masculine needs and masculine duty. A hymn, a brief responsive service (the new penitential office, Lesser Litany, or the Commandments only, will do), another hymn (both carefully

selected for men's voices), and then the address—seven minutes of well thought out truth, fire and point. End as you begin, on the minute, and the men will come; few at first, more afterwards.

We have our services on Wednesday and Thursday noons (two days together are more easily remembered). We began with a dozen men. Personally, we asked only the organist, and two or three to lead the singing. In two years the number has fully doubled. The men themselves have learned to like the service and to work for it.

The church should be within five minutes of the business part of the town. If it is off at one end, a down town room or small store must be made comfortable and attractive. The address must be manly and deal with manly duty in a manly way. If you are not sure what that means, get a few copies of *The St. Andrew's Cross* (Mission House, New York City), and study it. It is the one paper of the Church for men only.

ALFORD A. BUTLER.

THE VITAL FORM OF BELIEF.

BY THE LORD BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S.

Our Lord said, "Work not for the food which perishes, but for that food which the Father giveth unto you, for Him did the Father even seal."

The people, having followed the Saviour across the Sea of Tiberias and again found Him, put to Him the question, "What are the works of God, and how can we perform them?" His reply was, "This is the work of God that ye believe in Him whom He has sent."

The answer differs widely from the question. The people appear to have had in view certain works they had to perform to carry out His Will, but our Lord tells them there is but one, "that ye believe in Him."

One thing is needful—Belief—not mere head belief, but the belief of the heart, including a perfect trust in Him, self-surrender, the belief of a child in its father, the belief of a man in the friend who has the will and power to help and guide him—containing within itself the affections. All things done in the strength of Religious Belief are gathered up in itself. What is there that strengthens a man's spirit like a perfect trust and confidence in a Higher Power? This belief is something more than a state of once believing and then that belief coming to an end—not, as it were, a sudden flash—but an abiding, lasting condition of the soul for ever. It is not only to believe in a mere Creed, a set form of words, but in a real Person, even Christ—that ye believe in Him whom He hath sent. It is only an actual person can command a true belief of the affections. No doubt a form of words in a Creed is an excellent thing in itself as an assistance to religious feeling. We believe in Him who is sent, not when we recite a Creed as a mere form of words, but when we cleave to a Person, the Son of God Incarnate, even Christ.

So it is with Faith when we refer it to Him. Sometimes Faith is preached as if Faith alone had a value,—as if the justification by Faith was a justification through a Faith in one's own Faith. It cannot be so; justification can only be by and through Him, even as all things centre in and issue forth from Him.

There is no man—however anxious he may be for the service of God, however he may strive to walk uprightly, but who frequently, not without cause, bewails his own shortcomings. And we all at times may have to grieve for the faults and failings of those dear to us—but we know that there is a Root of the Tree of Life in them which may one day become a growing plant, put forth branches and leaves, and bear pleasant fruit. This happy thought may save us from despairing about ourselves, and may serve to make us more charitable to others.