

class, at any rate, has been so. The women engaged in teaching seem, as a class, to be neglected by the clergy, or at least the clergy are, it is complained, very unsympathetic. An executor's daughter writes: "I once lived for over four years in a house containing twenty or more teachers, connected with a girls' school of world-wide fame. A large proportion of us were university women and nearly all were really or nominally members of the Church of England. During all that time not once was any attempt made by any of the clergy of the town to know us, though the few of our members who were Congregationalists were visited by their minister." This is an extract from only one letter. In Canada the social arrangements are so different that complaints made of shortcomings in England would not apply. It is recognized by our clergy how important it is that our teachers of all grades and in all situations should be serious-minded men and women and the class which our bishops and archdeacons would be sure to see and consult with on their visitations.

#### Religious Teaching in Schools.

It is an unfortunate thing that for all practical purposes our Public schools and the clergy are separate. We may be thankful that the tone of our schools is so distinctly good and religious as it is. Yet it seems that constant care is needed to maintain even the present standard and it possible raise it. We used to hear of the Australian atheistic schools, but they have changed that. A Mr. Matthews, who was a missionary in a brotherhood in a sparsely settled part of New South Wales, gives, in a book he has published, the routine of his periodical visits. All the pupils, with a few exceptions, were in his class and he was pleased not only with the amount of school instruction, but with the conscientious care taken generally at home by parents, who would only have a church service three or four times a year.

#### Comprehension.

Unity is in the air. Since the Reformation there has grown a divergence of practice and of allegiance to one national standard. It is true that during all the Christian era there have been churches varying in details and there was the great disruption between East and West. But the movement for separate bodies and individual beliefs has grown, especially in Anglo-Saxon communities. Among the Nonconformists in England an attempt is now being made to confederate the different bodies into one, to be called the United Free Churches of England. The Rev. J. H. Shakespeare is an active agent and he is reported to have said recently, "Money is wasted in trying to buttress up feeble causes which have no real vitality. I hear of one country town in which there are about nine hundred Nonconformists. This town has Baptist, Congregational, Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist chapels, a branch of the Salvation Army, a mission hall, and two or three small gatherings of the Plymouth Brethren. I am certain this is not an isolated case." Mr. Shakespeare need be in no doubt. Over the length and breadth of North America, Australia, New Zealand, wherever our race congregates, Mr. Shakespeare will find this unhappy and needless divergence. Our Roman friends have their divisions, their orders and family differences, but they are all set aside at the chancel steps. We commend this rule to the serious consideration of all seekers after unity. A hundred years ago the Methodists used to communicate at the parish church, and quite recently, perhaps even yet, the Primitive Methodists belong to the Church of Ireland, in that country.

#### Christianity and India.

"The deepest and most fruitful and most permanent religious impress of Christianity on India," says Dr. E. H. Kellogg, in a recent

number of the Princeton Theological Review, "will be in far less measure by \* \* \* academic lectures from abroad, even to thronged audiences in great strategical student centres, than by the intimate, continuous contact through the hours and days and years of a lifetime, of the regular missionaries, whose life-study and life-work these themes and these tasks are—a contact maintained through all the manifold agencies and instrumentalities and varied individual gifts for service, through which the Holy Spirit can bring the Oriental consciousness into vital contact with and confrontation of the claims upon human allegiance and trust of the self-evidencing Christ of God." The learned writer then quotes with approval, the statement of Professor McEwan: "If there is one thing clear to the student of the early (Christian) centuries, it is that Christianity kept its hold on the world by the unswerving assertion of positive and exclusive truths," and the notable expression of Dr. Speer: "It is utterly inadequate to describe the invitation of Foreign Missions to the non-Christian peoples as an invitation to philosophical adjustment. It is an appeal for regeneration." These are strong, but justifiable statements. It may be added that Christianity is not a mere philosophical system of man's devising. It is a practical demonstration of the life of God in man.

#### PRAYER BOOK QUESTIONS.

For a long time we have had grave doubts as to whether the habitual worshipper of to-day, the member of the congregation, is as familiar with either the prayer or hymn book as he ought to be, or as his parents were when each carrying to and from service his own books. Is there not a habit of taking up the books in front and leaving them, and often all thought of their contents, until the next time? Are, in fact, the younger people as familiar with the service as in the old time before them? It may not be generally understood, but it is nevertheless a fact, that we regard our Readers as members of a large Church Family. A Family that it is our privilege and pleasure to try by every means in our power to inform as to matters pertaining to the life and progress of our branch of the Catholic Church, and also, if we may so express ourselves, to try with due deference but with earnest insistence to impress them with the great privilege they enjoy as members of the Church, and the grave responsibilities entailed upon them by such membership. And now, as already intimated, we seek to take a step in advance and through the medium of a series of carefully prepared questions on the Prayer Book, answers to which will be found in the Prayer Book and Bible, to be published weekly in our columns during the coming year, to rouse curiosity, stimulate interest, extend information and awaken zeal in the cause of the Church. In order to turn this new department to good account we commend it to parents and children; to teachers and pupils; to Sunday Schools, Bible Classes and candidates for Confirmation in the confident hope that it will prove a real blessing to their hearts and homes and will, throughout the Church in Canada, increase the knowledge of and love for that noble treasure of the British race—the Book of Common Prayer.

#### ADVENT THOUGHTS.

Bishop Gore of Birmingham has a wonderful gift for what may be called, clarifying statements. He is no coiner of catchwords, but he undoubtedly has the knack of devising and applying terms, which, as by a flash of intuitive penetration, light up certain questions more strikingly and effectively than the lengthy and elaborate utterances of other men. In a paper read at the

recent Church Congress at Cambridge, on our Lord's Second Advent, he spoke of it as being a "continuous" process. This, it seems to us, was an admirable way of putting the matter. Our Blessed Lord has always been coming again ever since when in His localized and materialized human presence He passed beyond mortal ken. At that moment the tide in human affairs turned, and it has been turning ever since. Christ's second coming, therefore, as the Bishop pointed out, is no isolated event, the sudden waking up, as it were, of God, the ending and the mending of all things as by some tremendous stroke, but the final culmination of a long train of interior causes working on a fixed and orderly plan. It is hard, perhaps, for many of us to realize this fact. We have been so accustomed to think of the Second Advent as a sudden catastrophe, the breaking in by God upon the established course of things, the reversing of prevailing and old settled conditions, the violent interruption of age-long trends and tendencies, that perhaps the Bishop's expression may impart something of a shock to some old-established and reverently cherished beliefs. This great truth has been swathed in imagery, and, as in the case more or less of every other Christian doctrine, people have come to attach really more importance to the figure than to the truth it illustrates. The Second Advent, like all the fundamentals of the Faith, has suffered from this literalism. It has fixed itself in the popular mind, and it has found eloquent expression in our hymnology as an act of vengeance by a long suffering and at last awakened God upon a hopelessly wicked and abandoned world, which has at last exhausted the Divine patience. The imagery employed in connection with this, the Second Advent, it must be acknowledged, does favor this idea if taken literally. No doubt, to the early Christian, oppressed with the conditions and outlook of his own day, this thought was a great comfort. He took it literally and it was intended that he should. Without such a source of consolation he might not have proved equal to the situation. His belief in the Second Advent, as the final and overwhelming triumph of Truth and Right, was not, it must be thought, simply a merciful delusion, but a highly idealized conception of an eternal truth, as real to us as it was to him. The Second Advent stands to-day for what it stood in the days of St. Paul, viz., the final victory of Truth and for our direct personal responsibility for doing our share in bringing about this great transformation. To the early Christian, tingling with the memories of Him whom they had seen face to face, His speedy return seemed the most natural thing in the world. They would have been more than human had they thought otherwise. The world to them was hopelessly and irredeemably given over to the powers of evil. They looked for a new heaven and a new earth in their own lifetime, and the only conceivable way by which this could be accomplished would be by some sudden and mighty intervention of Divine power. This was how they interpreted the Master's words. In their place we would most undoubtedly have done the same. It was impossible under the circumstances that they should see through the imagery and realize that this second coming should be a continuous operation, and that the conquest of the world for and by Christ should advance slowly and gradually from age to age. Taught by experience, we see it in another light. God has revealed His purposes to us as to the final regeneration of mankind. We have learned the deeper meaning of the Second Advent, just as we have learned and are still learning the deeper meaning of all the fundamental truths of religion, as we were able to bear it. God's slowly unfolding revelation adapts itself to the slowly unfolding moral and intellectual consciousness of man. In this sense theology is a progressive science. It teaches no new truths. It adds not one jot or tittle to the original deposit of the "Faith once delivered,"