

a Quiet Day held in Chicago, a lady writes: "It was indeed good to be there, for God was with us on that Quiet Day. Many hearts were melted and many resolutions formed. Will you allow me to express my sense of the great comfort and help derived from the Quiet Day, and also the wish that it might be of more frequent occurrence. I am sure no soul there went away without a blessing, without a wonderful sense of nearness to the Father, without an added strength for life's sorrows and burdens and cares." Would it not be possible to hold a Quiet Day here in Toronto? Teachers in Sunday schools, members of the Woman's Auxiliary, Girl's Friendly Society, and the ministering Children's League, those who visit the sick and the poor, or the charitable institutions, those, also, whose active home life prevents any outside work, in fact, all the Christian women of the Church need the help and strength such a day is calculated to give. Would not some clergymen acceptable to all, be willing to conduct the services if invited to do so? And would not the rector of one of the central churches grant the use of his church for such an occasion?

Hoping that some of my sister workers will express a desire for the same. Yours,
CHURCHWOMAN.

Bishop Strachan.

SIR,—When reading several accounts of the life and work of the late Bishop Strachan, I could not but feel that much of what is said of his early years is given us by those who knew little of Scotland, and probably nothing of Aberdeen. But I was fairly puzzled when I read in Bishop Bethune's "Memoir of Bishop Strachan," pp. 3 and 4, that he entered King's College, Aberdeen, in 1794, and took his M.A. degree in 1797, after "three years' stay at the University." I never before heard that it was possible to graduate under the four years' curriculum in those days, and thus I felt convinced that there was some thing that required explanation. To see how the truth lay, I wrote to my old friend, the Registrar, at Aberdeen University, and have received the following information, which will be of general interest: "John Strachan really entered King's College in 1793, for the entry at the head of the list in the *Album Studiorum* where his name occurs is '... in Alma Matris Album nomina retulerunt Januarius die ... Anno Salutis Hamanae, 1794,' shewing that the roll was not entered until the month of January, after the students came up. The date of his A.M. is 30th March, 1797. He had thus a four years' course like the rest." I am, &c.

JAMES GAMMACK, LL.D.

East Toronto, Jan. 15th, 1890.

Discipline.

SIR,—The Church of England is often reproached by outsiders for the total lack, or, at any rate, the extreme laxity, of discipline in her fold; and, it must be admitted, with great show of reason. It may be said in palliation, though not as a proper defence, that on the whole we get along as well as those who affect greater strictness; and that the condition of the "religious world" renders a thorough and effective discipline impossible, and any attempt to restore it now unwise. This is one of the unhappy results of religious divisions, and it is no small argument in favour of a united church. Two or three sessions ago a serious effort to secure a modicum of discipline was defeated by a lay vote in the Provincial Synod, though it must be within the recollection of some of your readers how zealously some laymen in the Toronto Diocese laboured to establish a complete code of discipline for the clergy. I think, however, that even as things are our Bishops have fairly adequate powers in all ordinary cases. Assuredly the case that now moves my pen could and should be dealt with without new legislation. Some time ago, or more exactly, three months ago a clergyman named Owen, of whom I know nothing, formally "joined the Reformed Episcopal Church" as minister of a congregation in Montreal. Not content with this miserable apostasy, he gave his reasons (save the mark!) in a column and a half of the "Star," defaming his mother as the home of Popery. This person who so valiantly then "nailed my flag to its mast"—so he expressed himself, in one short month finds out his mistake, and, instead of religiously reading his recantation before God's altar, writes it in the same newspaper. He announces to the world that he has now left the Reformed Episcopal Church "definitely and completely." "Two months' experience has sufficed to convince me that the Reformed Movement, as it exists, is not the way practically (sic) to better matters." So now though leaving the Reformed Episcopal Church he says, "I cannot add to return to the Church of England, for I never left her!" The hopeless folly of this is apparent, but he caps it by the wrong and shame of the next sentence: "Happily I am under no ecclesiastical ban, so I simply return to my former status as a clergyman

of the Church of England." If he is under no ban, he ought to be, and a very heavy one; and a bishop who should allow such a man to come and go at his own sweet will, is a traitor to the Church, whoever he may be. But that is not all. This pitiful reformer, once more settled in the home of Popery, absolves himself from all further obligation to purify the foul nest he sunk into, and concludes: "I must now leave to others the task of endeavouring to eliminate the Popery from our dearly loved Church of England." Of course the man is an arrant fool; but my contention is, that fools should not be allowed to make a toy of the Church of England.

Yours,

JOHN CARRY.

Port Perry, Jan. 13th, 1890.

Sunday School Lesson.

Septuagesima Sunday. Feb. 2nd, 1890.

"The Christian Faith—God the Father."

I.—"I BELIEVE IN GOD."

Many people say they will not believe what they cannot understand, yet they believe in life, growth, electricity, and many other things, without understanding very much about them. In this first Article of the Creed, we profess our belief in God, but we understand very little even of what we know about Him. We believe that God knows everything that has been or is to be, can read the thoughts of all men, is everywhere in heaven and earth, can do all things, but it is a very difficult matter to explain or even understand what is so far above our comprehension. It is said that all nations (except perhaps the Patagonians) have some object of worship. Men bow down to idols made by themselves or by other men; they worship the sun, the moon, or imaginary gods, good or evil. Man left to himself, never could have imagined the God who is revealed to us in the Bible; never could have imagined that He, the Maker of heaven and earth, "Who telleth the number of the stars," stoops to take care of sparrows, clothes the grass of the field, and—more wonderful still—loves us, His creatures, and asks our love in return. (1 S. John iv. 8, 9; S. Matt. xxii. 37.)

The gods of the heathen are nothing (1 Cor. viii. 4), or worse than nothing (Deut. xxxii. 17). Our God is "able to deliver" in time of danger (Dan. iii. 17; vi. 22). The Romans even worshipped the gods of nations that they had conquered, and were willing to multiply deities to an unlimited extent. We worship one God, as we say in the Nicene Creed (Deut. vi. 4; S. Mark xii. 29; 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6). The doctrine of the Trinity in Unity—three persons in one God—is fully expressed (not explained) in the Creed of S. Athanasius, according to the teaching of the Bible (S. Matt. xxviii. 19; 1 S. John, v. 7).

II.—"I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER."

(a) Heathen nations had a dim idea of God as a Father. The Greeks called their chief god, *Zeus*, the father of gods and men." (See also Acts xvii. 28). The Romans called their chief deity *Jupiter*, which means, "Father of day."

(b) The Jews knew that God was the Father of all men by creation, and their God because they were adopted into His family.

(c) Christians are God's children in a fuller sense. Members of Christ's mystical body, the Church (1 Cor. xii. 27), Children of God (Gal. iii. 26, 27). Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven (Rom. viii. 17). Until Christ came, God did not reveal Himself as a loving, tender Father (S. John i. 18).

He is "the Father (1) of our Lord Jesus Christ (S. John xx. 17); (2) of all men by creation (Isa. lxiv. 8); (3) of Christians by redemption through Christ Jesus (S. John i. 12).

III.—"ALMIGHTY."

God is all-mighty—nothing is too hard for Him (S. Matt. xix. 26). Isaiah, to show his greatness, says He "weighs mountains in scales." The nations compared with Him "are as a drop of a bucket," and the inhabitants of the earth "are as grasshoppers." (Isaiah xl. 12-23.)

IV.—"MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH."

This is the first thing the Bible tells us about God (Gen. i. 1). Our own reason tells us that the wonders around us could not create themselves.

Scientists have tried to prove that life can be produced spontaneously, but have always failed. Life can only come from God, who is "the Life" (S. John xiv. 6). This great proof of His Almighty power distinguishes Him from all false gods (Ps. xvi. 5). S. Paul tells us to see the invisible things through the visible, or we shall be without excuse (Rom. i. 20).

All the works of God were originally good, only marred by sin and its consequences. We are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Ps. cxxxix. 14). The smallest creatures, invisible to the naked eye, are complete and perfect in every part. In the Nicene Creed, we read that God is the Maker "of all things, visible and invisible." These words were inserted because some people said that God did not create Satan and his angels. (Col. i. 16.)

Family Reading.

Devotional Notes on the Sermon on the Mount.

4—THE FIRST BEATITUDE.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

"All men were in attention," as He opened His mouth; and well may we listen to the words of Him who tells us of the Kingdom of God which He came to establish among us, of the blessedness which it brings to men, of the righteousness which He bestows as the means of blessedness.

What shall His first words be? In how many different ways that question would have been answered by His hearers! Perhaps even now, with all our learning and all our teaching, we might find some difficulty in answering this question, unless we called to remembrance these first words uttered on the Mount. At least, we know that they are not what many of His hearers expected. But they are in perfect consistency with all His other teaching. "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Our Lord does here virtually say to us that poverty of spirit—whatever that may mean—lies at the very foundation of blessedness for the children of men.

And what does it mean? It is unnecessary to waste words on the opinion that it refers to mere poverty in regard to the good things of this life. Doubtless, poverty is often blessed to a man's spiritual good, and wealth is often a temptation and a danger. But poverty is also a danger, and it would not be true to say that it brings with it, as a rule, the possession and enjoyment of the Kingdom of heaven. Poverty may harden, when it finds a worldly disposition, as truly and as certainly as riches.

The poverty which our Lord here speaks of is undoubtedly the consciousness of our own indigence, dependence, insufficiency. The word *Spirit* is used in the New Testament in two senses. It is used in distinction from *Soul*. The *spiritual man* is contrasted with the natural (*soulish*) man. It is also used in distinction from the understanding; as when S. Paul speaks of praying with the spirit and with the understanding. The spirit, in this connection, clearly means the inner consciousness, the feeling. And this exactly corresponds with the thought in the first Beatitude. Blessed are those who are conscious of their poverty, who know themselves to be poor.

Yes—only thus can men be blessed, when they know the truth about themselves. For, by nature, without Christ they are poor, and blind, and miserable; and no good can come to us until we know our need. Everywhere in the Gospel this thought is made prominent. "I came not to call righteous men, but sinners to repentance." "They that be whole need no physician, but only those that are sick." How should we seek for help; how should we accept the help that is sent to us unless we knew of our need?

But how is it that the men who are conscious of their spiritual poverty are blessed? Certainly not in that consciousness or in that poverty. Poverty in itself is an evil. The consciousness of poverty can only bring a sense of oppression. It is because it prepares for something better that such a spirit is blessed. It is the preparation for

the Kingdom of God.

It were too full to tell of the Kingdom of God, which is the Kingdom of Divine blessing, subject of his proper admitted word of Christ the right which the

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