

EVANGELICAL TRUTH AND APOSTOLIC ORDER.

# The Western Churchman.

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## PUBLISHERS' NOTICE.

The Western Churchman is published on the first of every month. Communications for insertion and copy for advertisements should be in the office not later than the 21st of the month.

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All business communications should be sent, and money orders, cheques, etc., made payable to Wm. Kirkland, Business Manager, Box 310, Winnipeg.



## The Communion of Saints.

The festival of All Saints reminds us of a doctrine of the Faith often neglected in our teaching and practice, that of the Communion of Saints. The festival is that which closes the cycle of commemorations which mark the course of the Christian year. It sums up in thought the memory of those many Saints of God for whose life and example the Church gives grateful thanks, but who are too numerous to name separately. Indeed, many of them we could not name, for their names are not remembered on earth, but are recorded only in the Book of Life.

The Communion of Saints is the bond which unites the members of the Church on earth with the Saints in Paradise, and even with the angels in Heaven. "We are come to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first born, . . . and to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. xii, 22, 23). What more perfect description could we have of our inheritance? "I believe in the communion of saints."

Concerning the condition of departed saints in Paradise we know but little; but we gather that they are in a state of rest, that they enjoy the felicity of communion with other saints face to face, that they are praying for the coming of the Lord, that they take a lively interest and sympathy in

the welfare of the Church militant on earth. We also understand that their condition is one of gradual progress towards a higher, happier, and purer life, until they are fitted to enjoy the presence of God and see Him as He is.

But the Communion of Saints reminds us of the fellowship that unites the Church on earth with the myriads of Christ's saints. How can we realize our communion with them? How will it help us? There are two ways of entering into the communion. By commemoration and by meditation. The calendar of our Prayer Book gives us an outline of the saintly hosts: who, by holiness, or wisdom, or zeal, or faithfulness, have kept the faith and won the crown. We want to fill in the outlines. God's Church in the Old Testament, the early Christian Church, the Church of England, the Church of Canada, the Mission Field, what hosts of saints have lived nobly for Christ and Truth! As the days come round, let us remember them, thank God for them, pray for grace to follow their spirit and example. By meditation we enter more closely into the spirit of the saintly life. Nor shall we honor Christ less if we meditate more upon His saints. For what we seek in them is the Christ-life, as lived amid temptations and difficulties and with faculties no greater than our own. And we praise Christ the more because we see the triumphs of His grace in the lives of His servants.

So the doctrine of the Communion of Saints shall give us strength in times of weakness, faith and hope in times of dark despair, and daily stimulus and encouragement in

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