

Old Church Bell.

Philadelphia is favored in having citizens who have preserved the early gifts to the church. Christ Church had a bell which was first rung in 1695. It is still used to call the faithful to worship in Christ Church chapel in the west end of the old city. In consequence of the great fire London has few older relics.

The Rev. Dr. W. S. Rainsford.

Those of us in Toronto who knew the curate of St. James' are getting few and middle aged. But although he has been the rector of St. George's, in New York, for many years, he is still remembered with affectionate regard. His parish publishes a year book, and Dr. Rainsford has, this year, added a long statement written in his own frank, manly style, he says: "Year by year it grows a little more difficult to bring our neighbours into the church or its kindred organizations. I know this is not a conclusion which would ordinarily be drawn by intelligent readers of general church reports and year-books, for I know that this is not the tenor of the usual annual report. All the same, I think it is true; and I speak with a wider personal knowledge of church conditions all over this land than most rectors have been able to win. If I say in this year nineteen hundred and one—as I do distinctly—that the tide ebbs strongly from all forms of organic Christianity, I do so, not to discourage, but to encourage to wiser and more persevering effort. Perseverance in the face of difficulties is the only way out. There is a steady, though slow, falling away in the attendance of our Sunday evening congregation at St. George's, and yet since I have been rector the service [conducted by assistances] has never been so efficiently rendered, nor has the preaching ever been better; it is positively good. The change in Sunday observance is very great. Multitudes of men—good men and good citizens—who used to come to church more or less regularly, now spend Sunday in outdoor recreation of one sort or another. There has been a lamentable increase of social entertainment on Sunday, and this among a class that have absolutely no excuse for making this misuse of the Lord's Day, for they have plenty of leisure the other six days of the week to entertain as much as they choose. By using the seventh day for such purposes, they overwork their servants and they add to the strain and stress of life. They generally neglect their children, if they have any, and, consciously or unconsciously, they take away somewhat from the repose and quiet of the day—a repose and quiet that are more needed by our sorely beset generation than ever before. And again speaking of the schools. "But here, speaking of the influence of the Church on the young, I must remind you that the present method of Sunday school teaching all over our land is utterly inadequate to attain the results it sets out to attain. Our Sunday Schools are coming into comparison with the day schools naturally, and the comparison is less and less favorable to the Sunday School. In the day school, the methods of teaching have greatly improved, while we still hand over the children for that too brief, uncertain hour on Sunday morning to the zealous, but, alas, often utterly untrained volunteer."

President Roosevelt.

There is nothing like going abroad for news. We are amazed sometimes to read in

our exchanges from the States of Canadian incidents of which we have never heard. Similarly we read in an old country paper that recently President Roosevelt preached in a church in Chicago. The subject of the discourse is what we might expect from the strenuous president, carrying our Christianity into every act of life, and not leaving it at the church door.

The General Thanksgiving.

Bishop Paret says: Some years ago there seemed to be a fancy for having the General Thanksgiving said like the Confession, in concert, by minister and people together. In some few places (I am glad in none in Maryland) it still prevails. Soon after the beginning of my Bishopric, I found the usage just taken up in two or three congregations, but they at once kindly yielded to my request and abandoned it, that unity of usage might prevail in the Diocese. It was, I think, a Gladstonian fad; if not suggested by that statesman, at least pushed into prominence by some letters of his expressing his approval of it. But not only does the printing in the Prayer Book clearly distinguish it from the things to be said in concert like the Confession, Creed, etc., but there has been almost a decision. In the General Convention of 1880, when changes of the Prayer Book were under consideration, a memorial was read in the House of Bishops asking a decision as to the propriety of reading the General Thanksgiving and the opening sentences of the Litany by minister and people together. The question was considered, and the opinions expressed were almost unanimously against the proposed usage. And in the House of Deputies the rejection was quite as positive. In my judgment, it is not permissible.

ADVENT.

The Church, like the Holy Scriptures, which it faithfully reflects in her doctrine, and in her arrangement of the Christian year, making the seasons as they roll witness to Christ, also makes much of the Advent, past and future, of the Lord Jesus. She takes in one comprehensive view a retrospect, which includes the birth and the life on earth, with all its blessed results, of her divine Head and King, and she also looks prospectively forward to the day when He will come again, and is ever in an attitude of expectation "waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus Christ is the revelation of the Father's love, and its truest and fullest expression. God's character is best described in the brief statement of St. John that God is love. The Christian conception of Deity is that of infinite love combined with infinite power. Hence the coming of Christ in the flesh introduces a new element into the mass of humanity, a leaven, which has already largely transformed society, and is destined to affect it for good, in ever increasing measure in all directions, the leaven of love. It has been well described as "the greatest thing in the world." The effects of His Advent were at once apparent. He taught a lofty morality, such as had never been conceived of before, and made love the basis of it, saying: "If ye love Me keep My commandments." Antiquity outside the Jewish world, had no conception of what we call sin. Christ revealed what sin was, and was Himself the remedy, which

the Father's love provided, who gave His only son to be both a sacrifice for sin and an ensample of godly life. The brotherhood of man, as well as the Fatherhood of God, can only be conceived and realized in Christ. It was something of which the ancients in their higher philosophy never dreamed. To the Greek, the word "humanity," as a term for the wise brotherhood of all races, was unknown. The Roman, in common with antiquity at large, considered all who did not belong to his own state, as hostes or enemies. It was left to Christ to proclaim the brotherhood of all nations by revealing God as their common Father in heaven, filled towards them with a father's love; by His commission to preach the gospel to all; by his equal sympathy with the slave, the beggar, and the ruler; by the whole bearing and spirit of his life; and above all, by His picture of all nations gathered to judgment at the Great Day, with no distinction of race or rank, but simply as men. The immediate result of our Lord's teaching was an improvement in the condition of woman, of the slave and the poor, which under paganism was wretched and unhappy. Philanthropy was revealed by Christ, and the ancient world before He came had no asylums for the poor nor hospitals for the sick. The altruism of our day, the seeking the good of others, is the direct effect of the teaching and example of Him who lived and died for us, and came not to be ministered unto but to minister. The advent of Christ not only revealed the power and permanence of love, but it inspired an undying hope in and of humanity. The future with the Christian is an open secret. The hopes of humanity are fixed on Christ, as we trace all that is highest and best in our lives and in civilization to Him, so also we anticipate the final triumph and supremacy of good over evil, of happiness over misery, of the perfection of humanity in the fulfillment of His promises, in the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Only in the realization of Christian ideals is there any future or hope for humanity. Present progress in all that elevates morally or socially is stimulated by the thought that it is cumulative, and will culminate in the establishment of a universal kingdom of righteousness and peace. Contrast this inspiring and hopeful outlook with the terrible alternative towards which an eminent authority tells us science and thought are at present tending, and we shall indeed be thankful for all that Christian hope inspires compared with the gloomy prognostications of the agnostic and the infidel. The following from a contemporary explains what we mean: "Prof. Goldwin Smith, of Toronto, has long been one of our keenest thinkers and most brilliant writers; whatever subject he touches, especially in history and philosophy, he illuminates and gilds. In philosophy and religion he rejects the supernatural and has become thoroughly agnostic. Yet there are points in the path of agnosticism and materialism where he pauses and almost turns back to faith and worship. An instance of this is found in a recent view of his of Maurice Masterlinck's "The Life of the Bee," a profoundly philosophical study in which the author discusses the secret of the universe and says 'Should we discover some day that there is no secret or that the secret is monstrous, other duties will then arise that as yet perhaps have

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