

Divine protection before separating for rest at night.

We know that it is often pleaded that time is wanting for this service. But, surely, if the heart was in the matter, time could be found. No one can honestly say—a very few exceptions being allowed for—that it is not possible or practicable to secure five or six minutes, morning and night, for family worship, and yet that brief period will suffice to read reverently a portion of God's word and to call devoutly upon His Name. There are several excellent manuals of devotion which may be used for this purpose. It is a pleasant thing to add sacred song to the service where that is practicable. Let us say, as a practical suggestion, that in our own experience the time immediately after the evening meal is the most convenient hour for evening worship. Then the *whole* family can be gathered, youngest as well as oldest, and in places where there are many evening occupations this is an important consideration. But the great thing is that at some time—which let its own convenience determine—the family, *as a family* should unite in the worship of God.

Still again, we fear that in many families the religious instruction of the children is almost entirely relegated to the Sunday-School. Such a use of the Sunday-School is to pervert it. It is a very valuable auxiliary, but it cannot, without great harm, be made a substitute. We will not dwell on this point, but simply commend it to the earnest consideration of our readers.

We rejoice that there are many Church homes which are what they ought to be. Under God, our hope for the future rests on them. But there are other homes, where the parents and perhaps other members of the family are confirmed and communicating church members, where household religion does not flourish. Perhaps no blessing is invoked upon the daily food. There is no fire, not a spark, upon the family altar. There is no study of the Word of God in the family, nor instruction of the children by the parents in religious knowledge. The whole atmosphere is worldly. Alas! can we say of such a household any other than this?—it has a name to live, but it is dead.

Editorial Notes.

UNIVERSITY FEDERATION.

We notice that this question is receiving much attention in Ontario, and it would seem as if its realization is almost a certainty. We do not, however, sympathize with the movement from a Church standpoint, and have been somewhat astonished to note the readiness of those in authority in the great Church University of Ontario to fall in with this movement. That necessity exists in Canada to prevent the extension further of, and perhaps even to reduce, the degree-granting power, is, we think, undeniable, and, recognizing this, we are pleased to see a fusion of Universities attempted. But it seems to us that the fusion to be aimed at is that of all the *Church of England Universities* in Canada into one strong central Church University, rather than that proposed in Toronto, of all denominational colleges into one Provincial—State—University. We strongly incline to the view that this latter scheme will ultimately result, if not in an actual divorce of religion and education, at least in a weakening of religious and Churchly influence. Surely the Church, would be best served and her children be best prepared for her

work, under a system of training which retained hold of them throughout the whole of their collegiate career—yes, and from their earliest school-days. Although the question of a central Church University was proposed at one of the Provincial Synod meetings, we are not aware that any very earnest effort has been made to carry into effect the resolution then adopted, and we certainly regret the acceptance of the Ontario Provincial Scheme before such effort has been made. We do not know whether the authorities of Trinity College are too far committed to this scheme to permit of their withdrawing from it or not—if not, we would express the hope that, in the interests of the Church, they would postpone action until at least an earnest effort has been made to carry into effect the formation of a Church University for the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada.

THE CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES.

We have on different occasions noted the wonderful progress of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States, even in those States wherein the Puritan element prevailed, and wherein in times gone by the *religious liberty* theory, so boldly but falsely advanced as characteristic of this class, was belied by the grossest persecution of such as belonged to the old Church of England. It is pleasing to find that the progress referred to has become marked enough to claim the attention of the secular press of the great commercial metropolis. The *New York Tribune*, in an article on "The Religious Outlook," pays her the following worthy tribute:—

"The Protestant Episcopal Church is steadily growing in strength and numbers. Its missionary work in the West is flourishing, and there has been a notable increase in the clergy, many of whom have come from other denominations. In works of practical philanthropy it is rapidly taking a foremost position, while in its last Church Congress—held at Detroit, in October—its clergy showed themselves able to grapple with some of the most important social and economic questions of the day. It enters upon a new year with a promise of abundant usefulness in the future."

We reverently add, God grant this great and active branch of the Holy Catholic Church greater progress still, and an ever-increasing influence over and firmer hold upon the masses of the people. "Peace be within her walls"—may her priests be clothed with righteousness, and the saints within her fold sing with joyfulness.

Black Letter Holy Days.

[The following ought to have appeared as the heading to the notice on this subject in our last issue, but did not reach us in time.—ED.]

The Black Letter Holy Days in the Calendar of the Church of England are so called to distinguish them from the Holy Days for which services are appointed, and whose names in a properly printed Calendar are in *red*. They are the remnant of a much greater number which were in the Calendar before the Reformation, and which were distinguished in one way or another in the daily services; and they were retained in our present Prayer-book for this special reason, perhaps, among others, that they serve to connect and identify the Church of the present day with that of the whole of the long ages since Christ came, and so with the various forms of the Church of God since the creation.

They consist of days commemorating—

- (a) Persons and events connected with our Blessed Lord;
- (b) Saints and Martyrs of the first four centuries;
- (c) Saints of the Church of England and the British Church;
- (d) Great Fathers of the Church;
- (e) Saints of the French Church, inserted to keep up the remembrance of the close connection between the ancient British and the Gallican Churches; and
- (f) Three other days to be alluded to in their turn.

Of all these the dates are mostly either arbitrary or traditional, but no more so than are those of the Red Letter Holy Days, of the Annunciation, the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, or, perhaps, Christmas Day.

As a whole the Calendar, and especially the Black Letter Holydays, stands forth as a perpetual witness against the arrogance of Rome which denies the ancient origin of the Church of England, an origin almost if not quite as ancient as her own, and which claims all the Saints and Sacred Days as peculiarly belonging to herself, and to the ignorance of ultra Protestants and of those Churchmen too, who lower the dignity of the Church to the level of modern sects.

3. *Blasius, Bp. and M.*, was the Bishop of Sebaste, in Cappadocia, a part of Armenia. He suffered martyrdom in the 10th or Diocletian persecution, A.D. 316. According to tradition, he was tortured by having his flesh torn with iron combs. This proving insufficient to shake his constancy, he was beheaded, by order of Agricolaus, the president. He is the patron of wool-combers, and is represented in pictures with an iron comb in his hand.

5. *Agatha, V. and M.* A Sicilian lady of noble birth, who died for her religion at Catania, in Sicily, in the 7th or Decian persecution, A.D. 253. On account of her beauty, she was pursued by Quintianus, the praetor, but not yielding to his solicitations, she was imprisoned as a Christian, and tortured, being burned with hot irons, and having her breasts cut off with shears. On being returned to prison, she commended her soul to God and expired. She is represented bearing in one hand a pair of shears and a palm, and in the other a salver, on which is a female breast.

14. *Valentine, Bp. and M.* An ancient Presbyter, who was beheaded at Rome, after a year's imprisonment, in the reign of Claudius II., A. D. 270. His being called a Bishop in the Calendar is perhaps a relic of the promiscuous use of the title *Episcopus* by both the first and second orders of the ministry in the early Church. He is said to have converted the whole family of Asterius, his gaoler, by restoring his daughter to sight. He was so famous for his love and charity that the custom of "choosing valentines" is thought to have been a very early way of commemorating his day, which has been observed for over 1,200 years.

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