

act, what you must do, if you would indeed and in truth enjoy the rich blessings which the Lenten season affords to all who properly improve it. Be constant in your attendance on the services of the Church; regular in your private devotions; give gladly of your goods; judge yourself; afflict yourself; bring your body into subjection, and keep aloof from the world. Take up your cross daily. Jesus, the loving Saviour, chose the Cross, and bore it, and died upon it; and what a mockery of the faith that is which gives us all of religion but the trial, which exhibits the Master in hourly tribulation, yet would have His people clothed in soft raiment. If God—severely kind—has not afflicted you, learn in some way to afflict yourself. Alay the fervor of fleshly will by mortification; of ambitious desires by purposed and resolute self-abasement. Exercise your hearts in loving sympathy with sorrow in every form; soothe it, minister to it, succor it, revere it. It is a relic of Christ in the world; an image of the great Sufferer; a likeness of the Man of sorrow; a shadow of the Cross. It is a holy and a venerable thing. Let this Lenten-tide bear you a good way towards that "rest that remaineth." Let it be a real step heavenward, and a real growth in Christ-likeness.

"It's true, we cannot reach Christ's fortieth day;
Yet to get part of that religious way
Is better than to rest;

We cannot reach our Saviour's puritie:
Yet we are bid, 'Be holy e'en as He!'
In both let's do our best.

Who goeth in the way which Christ hath gone,
Is much more sure to meet with Him, than one
That travelth by-wayse.

Perhaps my God, though He farre before,
May turn and take me by the hand, and more,
May strengthen my decayes."

—HERBERT.

THE CURIOUS ARTS.

SERMON TO BUSINESS MEN, BY REV. W. HAY
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Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together and burned them before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed.—Acts xix, 19, 20.

We noticed yesterday the great doity, Mammon; its worship, like that of other deities, by sacrifice; that he demands and receives at our hands the gift of that which ought to be most precious to us. I told you that one of the very first things that are frequently immolated at the shrine of Mammon is a good conscience; and no costlier offering can possibly be presented before the altar of this false god than such a thing as that. No man can part with a more precious treasure than a good conscience. I want to point out to you some other forms that this sacrificial worship of Mammon will take, and actually does take.

I desire to-day to call your attention to a further consideration connected with the worship of Mammon. All religions have their mysteries, as well as their sacrificial systems, and the worship or cultus of Mammon is no exception to this rule. There are the mysteries of Mammon, just as there are the mysteries of true religion, and as there are the mysteries of Paganism. The ancient forms of Pagan superstition had each of them mysteries of their own. Very profound those mysteries no doubt seemed to the uninitiated; very full of chicanery and deceit those mysteries no doubt seemed to those who happened to be initiated into

them. The great orator Cicero is reported to have remarked that he never could understand how two soothsayers could meet each other in the street without bursting out laughing, because they knew their own tricks that they were practicing upon the credulity of mankind. My friends, perhaps it would require a hierophant of Mammon to set forth properly the mysteries of this most mysterious of arts, but I do not think I should be wrong in saying that the curious arts practiced in connection with the worship of Mammon are quite as curious as any of the arts of ancient necromancy, or any of the mysteries of the ancient Greeks or Romans. I venture to assume that there are things as extraordinary performed in our midst in this enlightened nineteenth century in connection with the worship of Mammon as ever were thought or dreamed of by the most eminent or ingenious of those ancient Chaldeans. The effect of those mysteries must have been disastrous upon the ancient worship, for, for a man to know that he was living by chicanery and deceit was for him to lose his own self-respect. Those two soothsayers whom Cicero supposed to meet each other and burst out laughing, while perhaps their laughter might have been directed towards the credulity of the crowd, might rather perhaps more appropriately have shed bitter tears over the miserable degradation to which they themselves were condescending to stoop.

In every age of the world's history, society has had no worse foe than a habitual humbug. It is not an uncommon thing to talk about the humbugs of religion. I am not sure that it might not properly be a more common thing for Christian men to speak about the humbugs of commerce. You know more about them than I do, but the little that I know about them has impressed my imagination somewhat powerfully. You have mystic transactions here amongst you, as we have in our own country, which may overawe the uninitiated and lead us to feel what a terrible and fearful and wonderful thing a Stock Exchange is. But just so far as an uninitiated understanding begins to grasp the nature of some of the transactions, at any rate, which are performed in these secret and consecrated regions—just so far as the understanding begins to grapple with what is really meant by them, just so far astonishment and admiration begin to give way to contempt, and by and by we begin to feel, after all, that this much beloved worship of Mammon is as full of hollow chicanery and miserable humbug as any system of Oriental superstition that ever existed in the good old days gone by.

What shall we say about these curious arts? There are curious arts, which go by such curious names as bulling and bearing; very curious names, indeed, and very curious the things that these same names represent. Now, we recognize these institutions as institutions amongst us, as part of our commercial machinery. It is coming to be regarded as a natural thing that there should be an undue, an unnatural, an untruthful inflation of the market at one time, and then an equally undue, unnatural and untruthful depression of the market at another time; and men who call themselves business men actually lay themselves out to produce such artificial conditions of the state of a market as I have just described. Now, that there must be rises and falls in the prices of materials is so obvious, that the fact need scarcely be commented upon; but that any man calling himself a man should lay himself out to increase his own fortune by conveying a false impression to the minds of the community at large with respect to the value of certain commodities—that this, I say, should take place, is an outward and visible sign of a low moral condition. Do not let us blink the fact. It stares us in the face. In other words, this is nothing more or less than a fashionable and a gentleman-like way of picking pockets.

There is an ungentleman-like and an unfashionable way of picking pockets, and it is done by people with ragged coats, for the most part—people who do not occupy a reputable position in society. They do not drive in their carriages and pair, and do not have grand drawing-rooms furnished with every luxury and adorned with works of art. They are poor fellows, for the most part; there is a very slender step between them and starvation, and in order to satisfy the cravings of hunger and keep themselves alive, they do occasionally a brisk trade in pocket-handkerchiefs. We know it is dishonorable; we call them thieves, and if we can only catch them we send them straight off to prison. But you will bear me out that there are other ways of picking pockets, that there are many men who steal besides those that pick pockets in the street. When a man induces a false conviction with regard to the value of an article, with a view to his own emolument, or when conversely that man lays himself out to depreciate that same article, still with a view to his own emolument, what is he doing? In the first place, let me say, as straight as I can put it, he is lying; and the business man that lies does not deserve the name of a business man. It seems to me that legitimate, manly, straightforward commerce precludes this idea of chicanery and deceit; that in so far as you are a liar, you are not a proper business man, and in so far as you are a proper business man, you are not a liar. A man that condescends to devices of this kind in order to increase his wealth, is making a confession that he is not a proper business man. Why? Because he cannot trust himself to do business with his compeers in commercial life on honorable terms and conditions; he cannot trust himself, and by the very false impressions which he generates, and by the very lies which he circulates, he is practically making this confession: "I am so much an inferior in commercial capacity to my neighbor on the other side of the road who deals honestly, and whose business transactions are straight, that I cannot keep pace with him as long as I am handicapped with honesty. He prides himself that he can be honest, strictly upright in all his transactions; what he says, you know he means. On the other hand, I am so much inferior in commercial capacity, or—there is an alternative perhaps—I am so much his superior in commercial rapacity (that may be the alternative, and I will give you the benefit of the doubt), that I find it necessary to resort to means that he never would condescend to resort to. He tells the truth; I lie. He gives a straightforward opinion; I create false impressions. If a man asks me as to the character of goods which I am interested in, or stocks in which I am dealing, whereas my neighbor would endeavor to let the man know exactly what the true state of things is, I, on the other hand, am such a pitiful specimen of a business man, that I have to endeavor to throw dust in the man's eyes." What a confession for a man to make! But these are very mysterious arts, are they not? Quite as curious as the arts of ancient necromancy.

(To be continued.)

A PAROCHIAL MISSION.

(By the Bishop of Bedford.)

It is a serious thing to resolve upon a Mission in one's parish, and needs much serious thought. It is bringing a very powerful force to bear upon one's people, and they will be the better or the worse for it. It cannot leave the parish as it finds it. To invoke this powerful force lightly and carelessly, without definite aim and purpose, and without a distinct grasp of the practical working and ultimate results of a Mission, is to make a fatal mistake. A man who, conscious of his own defects, and of