

A parish does not exist that a certain number of people may enjoy "eloquent preaching" or "artistic singing," or that they may have a beautiful church in which to worship, or cushioned pews in which to dispose themselves. It does not exist to pay a large salary to "a first-class man," or three or four thousand a year "to first class performers" in the organ loft. If these things are the ends for which parishes exist, we must confess they are hardly worth the trouble of organizing or sustaining. And it is just because these things are taken to be ends—because so many good people feel that, having all these, the parish is complete and its purpose reached—that so many of our parishes are so useless, cumberers of the ground, and shames to the Church whose name they bear.

How many sinners are brought to repentance and better minds? How many unbelievers are trained for Holy Baptism? How many children are instructed for Confirmation? How many outcasts are gathered into the fold? How many poor and destitute are cared for, warmed and filled? How bravely is the battle fought for the Lord Jesus against the world and the devil? How much does the parish do, and how many dollars does the parish give away? These are the questions which will test the value of the use, good friends who read this of St. Paul's, or St. John's, or St. James' parish, of which you are, perhaps (we trust), justly proud.

The sad thought is, that St. Paul's, St. John's, or the rest, may be very "prosperous," very very "strong," very "large" parishes, able to command "the first talent," both in pulpit and organ loft, and very well satisfied with themselves, without being able to give any answer at all to such questions, and alas! without any idea, often, that such questions are not utterly impertinent and absurd!

If you belong to any such parish, good reader, do set yourself thinking. For, positively, your parish may be, according to its own measure, a very fine parish indeed, when it really is not worth house room in the Church or diocese.—*Church Journal.*

## FAMILY DEPARTMENT.

### SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

"Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God."—St. Luke viii. 10.

O fathomless profound of rest,  
In God to read a Father's name;  
And child-like clinging to His breast  
My birthright in His love to claim!

O Miracle of grace to kneel  
With boldness at the Throne of thrones;  
Blood-washed with nothing to conceal;  
White robed amid God's ransomed ones.

O mystery of love divine!  
Eternal Spirit, dost Thou choose  
To make my lowly heart Thy Shrine  
And there Thy light of life diffuse?

And am I of the chosen Bride,  
Given by the Father to the Son  
In all His glory glorified  
And in His perfect union one?

O love which only love can know!  
O joy which only faith can share!  
A child of God at school below;  
A child at home for ever there.

—*Bickersteth's Year to Year.*

## A MISERABLE CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

[Continued.]

The last order was shouted through the window as the carriage rolled rapidly away. In a few minutes they gained the spot where

the old woman was lying as one dead, under the leafless hedge, with the blood staining the thin shawl which was wrapped about her. Her old, wrinkled face had lost all its apple-red and her grey hair, scanty and short, had fallen from under her white cap. Both Dr. Layard and Katie exclaimed in one breath, "Mrs. Duffy!"

Kate was not wanting in nerve, though she felt a little shaken and exceedingly troubled. She left the carriage and sat down on the bank, supporting Mrs. Duffy in her arms, while Dr. Layard made a brief examination of the wounds in the poor old woman's neck and shoulder. His expression was very grave, and he stood for a few moments deliberating silently, with his eyes fastened upon the death-like face of Mrs. Duffy and the pretty anxious face of his daughter.

"Is it dangerous?" asked Kate, falteringly. "Almost fatal," he answered; "within a touch of death. There's one chance. I'm thinking of driving straight to Lentford Hospital. It's a good, level road all the way, and the hospital is at this end of the town. If you get into the brougham first, I can lift the old woman and place her in an easy posture against you. Could you hold her pretty much as you are now for an hour or more? I'd do it myself; but you could not lift her in as I shall do. Are you strong enough?"

"I will be strong enough; I will do it," said Kate, lifting up her head with determination and endurance in every line of her face.

It did not occur to Dr. Layard that his carriage was a new one, handsomely lined and fitted up; but the servant's soul ran more upon such subjects, and he began to protest against lifting the wounded and bleeding woman into it. Such a very miserable old creature, too thought Bob; not a bit of a lady.

"Dolt! idiot! brute!" ejaculated Dr. Layard, in a high wrath; and Bob, who had only uttered half his protest, shut his mouth and was silent.

It seemed a very long time to Kate, though the carriage bowled rapidly along the smooth, straight old Roman road. Poor Mrs. Duffy gave no sign of life, but lay against her heavily, while her grey head resting upon Kate's shoulder. She held her as tenderly as she could, now and then clasping her warm fingers about her wrist, which was knotted and brown with age and hard work, but which gave no throb back to Kate's touch. Dr. Layard, who rode outside with Bob, looked round from time to time, nodding to her, but with so grave a face that she felt the case was very serious. She thanked God very fervently when the spires of Lentford came in sight, and the last notes of the morning chimes fell upon her ear. There were streams of people going to church, exchanging cheery salutations with one another; but many a person caught a glimpse of Kate's pale and agitated face, and the grey head lying against her neck, and felt a shadow pass over their own Christmas gladness.

Dr. Layard's carriage drove into the courtyard of the hospital; and then Kate was quickly relieved of her burden. Mrs. Duffy was carried away, and Dr. Layard followed her. Kate sat there anxious and troubled, while the clock in the nearest church tower struck one quarter after another, and Bob drove up and down at a snail's pace in dreary and monotonous turns. At length some one beckoned to him from the hospital portico, and Bob responded with an alacrity which betrayed his impatience. Kate only saw at the last moment that it was Dr. Carey, not her father, who had summoned him; and she shrank back, breathless and tremulous, into the corner of the carriage which concealed her best from him.

"Bob, your master says you must drive home," says Dr. Carey; "he will return by train in the afternoon."

"And the old woman, sir?" said Bob; "how's she goin' on?"

"Very little hope," answered Philip Carey, whose face Kate could not see, but whose voice made every nerve thrill.

"Is it murder?" asked Bob, who had known Dr. Carey as his master's assistant, and stood on very little ceremony with him.

"I'm afraid so," he said; "how are they all at home Bob? Miss Brooks and Miss Kate?"

"She's in there," said Bob, pointing with his thumb to the carriage. Kate roused herself to lift up her head with dignity, and sit erect upon her seat, and meet Dr. Carey's salutation calmly. It was nearly four weeks since he had written to her, and she had replied, "Come." He looked at her with an amazed and confused expression, and took off his hat, but did not attempt to speak. Both of them colored, and both bowed stiffly and in silence. Then Philip Carey, still bareheaded, and as if lost in thought, walked slowly back up the broad steps of the portico, and Kate cried most of the way home.

"I never saw anything like that," thought Bob; "and they used to be like brother and sister, almost."

It was late in the afternoon when Dr. Layard returned, and then he had to see the superintendent of police. The stranger who had passed through the toll gate had not yet been found; but he could not be far off, and Bob was ready to swear to him when he was taken. Kate's Christmas party passed off more successfully because one of the invited guests had been almost murdered on the highway. The news ran like wild fire through the town and neighborhood, and the farmer's wife came to tell of Mrs. Duffy's morning visit, and her cheerful carols just before the villain met her. She and Kate mingled their tears together over the recital, and Kate ended her miserable Christmas by going to bed with a very heavy heart.

The next day the stranger was found, and sworn to by Bob, though he flatly denied having been anywhere in the direction of the toll bar. Neither Dr. Layard nor the toll man could swear to him, as he had passed on the further side of the carriage while they were talking at the other window. He was an utter stranger in the neighborhood, without friends, and he stated that he was on the tramp. A very old pistol was found in a ditch near the spot where Mrs. Duffy had been shot. The man was sent in safe custody to Lentford, to be brought face to face with the old woman, if she should recover consciousness enough to identify him and give her evidence against him.

For twenty-four hours or more it continued very doubtful whether the poor old creature would ever rally.—She had not spoken since she had been found, but she lay perfectly tranquil and patient on her hospital bed. Now a gleam of a smile, like the momentary glimmer of the sun on a cloudy day, crossed her face, and her lips moved slightly, as if she were whispering. She knew when they were doing anything for her, for she tried to help herself, to raise her thin hand, or turn her grey head upon the pillow for them to see her neck.

Dr. Carey, who had known her in former days, spent as much time as he could beside her bed; and towards the close of the day, just before the night nurse was coming to take her turn, he heard her voice speaking articulately, but slowly and faintly, and he stooped over her to listen to what she said.

"Dr. Layard's daughter! Dr. Layard's daughter!" she murmured.

"Would you like to see Dr. Layard's daughter?" asked Philip Carey, in his clearest and most pleasant tone.

"Ay, ay," whispered the old woman.

"To-morrow you shall," he said; "it is too late now. To-morrow."

"Ay, ay," she answered, cheerfully.

"You will be better to-morrow," he suggested.