

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

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THE SEASONS OF THE CHURCH.

EASTER.

WHEN the Son of God came down from His throne of glory to take upon Him our nature there was, so far as we can judge, a twofold object in view,—a suffering for and with us in our humanity, and the fitting and preparing that humanity for the presence of God in heaven. Our Redeemer suffered humiliation by His union with our manhood in its weakness; but it was for the purpose of exalting that manhood by its union with the power and glory of God.

We have traced this vein of thought running through the seasons of Christmas, Epiphany, and Lent, and we now have brought before us, at Easter, our Lord's triumph over death by His mighty resurrection,—the first step in His exaltation, and in our exaltation through Him. How full of light, and joy, and hope is this truth to all faithful hearts. During the Holy Week we followed, day by day, our Lord in His mysterious sufferings, knowing that they were the means of our redemption, yet looking with awe upon that sad sight of suffering love when He, our divine Saviour, bare in His own body on the tree the sins of the world: but to-day He comes forth from the tomb, a conqueror over death. "Christ is risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."

At this time, therefore, the sacrifice had been completed, though our Lord had not as yet "ascended to His Father" to plead before the throne of God the efficacy of that sacrifice. And though the sacrifice was complete when He died on the cross, and the victory complete when he rose from the dead, His mission on earth was not accomplished until he had explained to His disciples "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."

It has always been understood that

in this interval of time, between His resurrection and ascension, our divine Lord was engaged in "opening to His disciples the Scripture," in "expounding to them in the Scriptures the things concerning Himself," showing them how the prophecies concerning His passion and death had received their fulfilment and had been crowned by His resurrection: and then instructing them in the worship which was to be offered, wherever His Church should extend, by means of which His One Great Sacrifice of Himself should be commemorated in the Holy Eucharist, as it had been anticipated in the Jewish sacrifices. And so it was that in every place where the Gospel of Christ was preached, and His Church established, whether at Jerusalem, or Ephesus, or Corinth, or Rome, or in Spain, or in Britain, or in Egypt, or in India, there Christians joined in that act of worship, which was, and is, and ever will be the distinguishing mark of our religion, by which the Gospel is preached both to the Church and to those without,—the shewing forth the Lord's death until He come again.

And the organization necessary for this our Lord was doubtless engaged upon during this interval between His resurrection and ascension. The Church of Christ is this organization: and this Church is called the Kingdom of God. Now a kingdom implies government, laws, judges to interpret those laws, officers who execute them, and the privileges of citizenship. All this is set forth in the season between Easter and Whitsuntide.

The proper lessons during Easter Week speak of the types of the Holy Sacraments—the water from the Rock, and the Manna—whereby the Church is nourished: of the laws whereby it lives, and of the institution of the Jewish priesthood. The first lesson on the