

The Church Guardian,
A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER, PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

IT IS NON-PARTIZAN.
IT IS INDEPENDENT.

It will be fearless and outspoken on all subjects, but its effort will always be to speak what it holds to be the truth in love.

Price only \$1.00 per Year.

The Cheapest Church Weekly in America.

Address THE CHURCH GUARDIAN,
Lock Drawer 29, Halifax, N.S.

**THE DIOCESAN CHURCH SOCIETY,
AND MISSIONS IN THE DIOCESE
OF FREDERICTON.**

THE time is near for our preparation for the great Missionary work of the current year. Soon the Board of Home Missions must make their estimates, and frame the Missionary schedule. Ere long, the Treasurer of the Society will close his annual accounts, and, it is to be feared, with a considerable balance on the wrong side; and, soon the Secretary will send out his notices and the blank forms, on the filling up of which so much depends. Never has this Diocese had so much need as now of wise counsel, active co-operation, and self-sacrificing gifts for the service of Almighty God.

A few years ago the position and prospects of this Society were otherwise. Its yearly income was on the increase; the parishes or missions, with few exceptions, complied readily with the local requirements, and the expenditure was kept within the income. Then it seemed as if the interests on legacies and the funded balances might be reserved to meet the diminutions of the grant from the S. P. C.; and some were sanguine enough to hope, that a little addition might be made to the limited stipends of the missionaries. No one then anticipated the occurrence of three calamitous fires, which wrought such untold injury; nor continued years of commercial depression. In the meantime, perhaps, not over wisely, but with the best intentions, the Society undertook the charge of several new missions, and work which had been previously abandoned. Who would not rejoice in this? It might be admitted, however, that the income of the Society was, in this way, overstrained. The expenditure now exceeds the income. Worst of all, the amount from annual contributions, on which the Society chiefly relies, is falling off. The grant from the S. P. C. still forms the larger portion of our assets, and this will be at once curtailed. This diminution will very properly go on, till, in a few years, this whole amount will probably be withdrawn. With the present condition of things, in the most important portion of this Diocese, the Society can hardly reckon on the usual contributions for the current year.

It may be said that the Churchmen of the Diocese will respond favorably to a special appeal. In many instances no doubt they will. But in looking this whole matter in the face, we must not over-estimate the ability of the Diocese. The whole population is small. Not that of a very large city in other parts of the world. Churchmen are in the minority. Men of large means are also in the minority, and still more they are in the minority who are disposed to give as God has told them to do. In every parish there are large and constant local calls—in many cases involving liberal expenditure. We may not, therefore, look for a large addition to our central fund. Nor can we, for many

years to come, expect that to be made up in the Diocese which the S. P. C. has so liberally given.

Relief, to a great extent, must come from the parishes or missions. In many of them much more may, much more must be done to relieve the central fund. To this matter the Church must be aroused. Now is the very time to act. Churchwardens and leading Churchmen in the several parishes and missions should at once, get to work and devise plans for increased local support, and either offer to the Board of Home Missions to make their parishes self-sustaining, or that they will be satisfied with a diminished grant. This must be done for the current year, and this proposition should come from the parish or Mission itself. There are few localities, if any in the Diocese, in which something in this way may not be done. Woodstock has set a noble example, not only relieving the Society from all charge, but contributing largely to the general fund.

But what is to be done with those parishes which will not move in this matter? Such as have for many years secured their main support through this Society, with a very trifling return, and where the number of communicants range from 30 to 50. There are instances when it would only be just to other parts of the Diocese to withdraw all aid till better arrangements are made. But what, in the meantime, of the clergyman and his family?

To one naturally disposed to take a hopeful view, the present outlook is somewhat overcast, but if its call is answered by earnest prayer and zealous determination, the clouds will disappear before the dawn of a brighter day.

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

We commend to Church-goers the article on the above subject, taken from the *New York Churchman*, which we printed on the first page of last week's *GUARDIAN*.

The lack of Christian courtesy and Christian fellowship, so plainly visible in our city Churches particularly, is a sad blot upon our professed Christianity. It is incomprehensible how members of the same congregation can, week after week, ignore the existence of their fellow-Christians, and neglect to show them some Christian attention.

This unhappy and unchristian pride dries up the very life blood of the Church, and drives from the Sanctuary and from the Lord's Table very many who, otherwise, would have surrendered their hearts to God, and warmly embraced the Christiana calling.

We say it advisedly, and with the greatest sorrow, whether our words be heeded in the proper quarters or not, that it is a sad reproach upon the Church of England, whose prayers are common prayers, whose services are the same for high and low, rich and poor alike, that any of her members should thus forget what they owe to themselves, their Church, and their God, and what is due to others of the same household of faith.

It was hardly a proper subject to be witty upon, but the sarcasm conveyed in the remark of the old lady to her minister, after hearing him preach a sermon on the recognition of saints in another world, was, perhaps, excusable. "And will Christians really know and recognize each other in Heaven?" she said. "Certainly," said the minister. "Then," said the woman, "it is more than they do on earth, for I have been a member of your Church for many years, and have gone to the Lord's Table and partaken, with other members of the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, and have never yet had the least recognition from any of them."

We do not for a moment mean to say

that this evil is peculiar to the Church of England, but that it is a very prominent evil in the Church no one can deny.

Lent is now upon us, if it be a cross to some to speak to a fellow-Christian of lowly birth or humble position, let them condescend to bear that cross for their Master's sake, and begin at once to learn the lesson which will soon remove it from that category.

We are particularly called upon at this Holy Season to direct our thoughts to the contemplation of the God-man—to Jesus the Son of Mary, the wife of Joseph the carpenter.

Can we learn nothing from His lowly birth? Can pride find a place in our breasts, as we stand by the Infant Child in the Manger at Bethlehem?

"The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord." Matt. 10—24, 25.

"THY WILL BE DONE."

BY MISS ADRIAN.

ONE of the hardest of our life-lessons is to learn and say and feel, from our hearts, the words taught by our loving Teacher, "Thy will be done."

It seems easy to feel these words in the sunny days of pleasure, but when the dark night of trouble closes in around us, what seemed clear and distinct before now seems dim and uncertain, and we cry in our distrust, "Lord, carest thou not that we perish?"

Oh! the extreme wretchedness of our hearts when we do give way to unbelief. All alone in our trouble (for our dearest friends cannot come all the way with us in our lonely path of grief), and seeing not the hand of our Guide, who alone can lead us safely through the darkness into light, we forget that His strong arm is around us, and that He leads the way through paths where He himself has before walked for our sakes.

Let us turn for a moment from our own sorrow and think of Him who, in the Garden of Gethsemane, while enduring such agony as none of us can fathom, still trusted in His Father's love, and prayed, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Cannot we then trust also—we who are ignorant of our own good. Instead of trying to weave our own destinies, and making such tangles and mistakes, let us give all the threads of our lives trustingly into the Great Weaver's hands, and know that in the end it shall be perfect work, for "all things work together for good to them that love God."

Though we may not be called on just now to give up any great thing to God, yet, we may always be ready to give up little things to Him, and thus learn to seek His will and not our own. Perhaps a Sunday School class calls for a little time and labor, or may be only our home duties take up almost all our time and attention. Then, we may do all these duties with cheerfulness and patience, because they are duties, and thus learn to forget self, and love to do God's will for His own sake. Then, when we meet with greater trials, we will bring them to Him and feel that they are no longer our care but His, just as the ravens are not our care, for "He careth for us" and them.

Let us now in the Lenten Season, on which we have just entered, practice self-denials and unselfishness and seek to love God's will better than our own, that His will may be done in us and by us.

PAROCHIAL PAPERS—VII.

THE COMMUNICANTS' CLASS.

THE Communicants' Class may be understood in two senses. It may be a class for those who have been confirmed but have not been urged to communicate on the day of Confirmation. Or it may consist of those who have become Communicants, and who gather together at stated times for instruction and encouragement.

With regard to the former, they will have received much training in the Bible and Confirmation classes which will not need to be repeated when they are being specially prepared for their first Com-

munion. It will not necessarily follow that, because they have not been advised to communicate on the day of Confirmation, nothing whatever will have been said to them of Holy Communion. That subject can hardly, *q. d.*, have been passed over in dealing with "Holiness, its nature and how to attain it"; or again, with "The Kingdom," or "The Ministry." And it will probably be the desire of the Parish Priest to bring his candidates for Confirmation as a body to communicate for the first time, together, as soon as convenient after the Confirmation. His aim will be, during the interval, to instruct them more pointedly as to the position which the Holy Eucharist occupies among the means of grace; to draw out for them the teaching of the bible, and, as a consequence, of the Church; and to prepare the soul for the spiritual strength and the ecstasy of holy joy to be sought and found in communion with its God.

But the Communicants' Class of this paper consists rather of the members of the congregation who are already upon the roll of Communicants. It will not be found practicable to obtain all, or even a majority of the Communicants of a Parish to attend such a class. There will, however, always be a certain number which diligent pains will be sure to increase, who will be glad of such an opportunity of help. There will be these sincere and humble followers of Christ, who will be thankful for the assistance of the pastor to whom they look for example and for guidance; from whom they will readily receive instruction in the aspirations and methods of the higher spiritual life; who are earnestly desirous of leading a life of godliness but feel constantly how very far they fall short of even their own ideal. There will be also the timid and the diffident, who fear to come to the Lord's table, and yet do not wish to stay away, who would fain learn how they may begin to tread the narrow way, and to bear the Cross after the Crucified. These last may need to be invited again and again. They may be by nature shy. But if they are members of the Guild, and are accustomed to attend its meetings, their shyness will by degrees wear off.

Such a class will be productive of many benefits. It will first of all have the great advantage of the concentration of energy on a definite aim. This is always an element of attraction to some minds. It will supply too, what ought not to be, but very often is lost sight of in the well beaten path of Church work, the opportunity, possibly in no other way to be gained, of mutual intercourse between the different grades of society in our flocks. What clergyman engaged in parochial work is there, who has not had reason bitterly to deplore the want of sympathy between the rich and the poor, or the proud and humble, in his congregation? Who is there that has not in vain tried to break down in every practicable way, the solid wall that hinders Christian fellowship between the followers of a common Lord? At the Rectory, in the Communicants' Class, all can meet on equal terms; even as at the Lord's table all partake, as brethren, of the same heavenly food. And not only so, but there cannot fail to be fostered between priest and people an intense spiritual love, a deeper confidence, a nobler zeal. In this matter the sects show their wisdom and teach Churchmen a salutary lesson. Without the centre of attraction possessed by the Church in her unchanging constitution and her unchangeable creed, they "cultivate the social element." And if with them it occasionally happens that the social meetings are so frequent and so exacting in their demands upon the time and energies of their members, as to defeat their own end by creating wear-

ness; that is no reason why the Church should not provide, by the higher aim of spiritual converse, for the holy fellowship of those who are members of the same Body, and yet have been placed, in God's providence, in differing social rank.

But more. How many who once in the fervency of new born zeal drew near to their Lord in the Holy Feast, as time effaces first impressions, and no particular effort is made to keep them alive, gradually fall away, and become, first irregular, and then indifferent. And this, in spite of personal appeal both public and private. If they had been induced from the first to attend the regular Communicants' Class, there is little doubt but they would have been retained, and their first love would have waxed strong.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of all lies in this; that in the Communicants' class, dealing as it professedly does with the most sacred depths of human need, is found an unquestioned opportunity of familiar speech and spiritual counsel. The truths and aspects of truth set before the mind in the teaching of the Class, will almost certainly draw on the anxious and enquiring soul to wish for a chance to state difficulties or seek advice. For this purpose, not only should the member of the class be encouraged to ask questions, but the invitation should always be given to any who may desire it, to remain behind for a quiet talk. The occasion will often be gratefully used, and has the great merit of being above suspicion.

The difficulty of obtaining suitable subjects for instruction is more apparent than real, and will be found to disappear on trial. There is the ever fresh topic of proper preparation. There are the different phases of the spiritual life; particularly the duty of self examination. There is the Communion office itself, which will bear all the expansion, explanation and illumination the scholarship and learning the teacher can apply to it, and then will not be exhausted. Other and cognate subjects will constantly suggest themselves to the earnest and faithful mind.

A few hints in conclusion may not be out of place.

First. A register of attendance should be carefully kept. Not that a roll should be publicly called; this would be too formal, and would savour too much of the school. But the pastor should never omit to mark down the attendance on his own private roll; not so much for the purpose of knowing who are present, as of marking who are absent. Absentees should be seen at once, and thus be led to feel that an affectionate interest is felt in their spiritual improvement. This will in most cases be warmly returned. It is not denied that such close supervision must be exercised with much tact and judgment. The clergyman is not a moral policeman. But he has to "feed the flock of God."

Second. When once the class is formed, no engagements must be allowed to interfere with it. The clergyman should be on his guard not to undertake any duties which will cause him to omit or to give less time than usual to preparation for it. There is nothing which so surely tends to make the members feel that their pastor attaches, after all, little importance to such agencies, as to see him allowing other engagements or personal pleasure to take their place. If they find that he allows insufficient excuses for postponing the class, they will be only too ready to do the same.

Third. There is a good deal in pleasant accessories. Let there be a comfortable room, with a warm fire, and good lights; and a hearty greeting for every one who comes. This may appear a small matter, but with some dispositions it weighs much. And when such me-