



THE LANTERN IN THE PARISH.

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THE increased opportunity that present-day arrangements afford for collecting and teaching large numbers of people at once will be thrown away unless some means be at hand for quickly holding and impressing them when so gathered together.

The power to do this most effectively is to be found in the use of the magic-lantern, no longer the toy or the mysterious pleasure-giver of our childhood, but a highly perfected scientific instrument, next to a man the most potent educational weapon of the day. And that for this reason: whereas the power of holding and leading others by the ears is given to but few and to them only for a time; the eye has been, and ever will be, the avenue the most easy of entrance, and quickest to receive and retain impressions.

Thus much in introduction, not as an apology for talking seriously about a magic-lantern, but, by re-stating a familiar truth, to show how important it is for the Church to be up-to-date in methods, if she is to maintain her claims to be a teaching and educating force in the world.

We must say at once that a magic-lantern is a necessary part of the mechanical outfit of every parish where-

in is a place to collect a fair-sized audience which needs teaching. How is this to be obtained? The usual objection is lack of funds, an obstacle sure to be overcome by patience and determination. A thoroughly efficient lantern is by no means expensive; it need not be "brass bound and extra finished," nor must it be a "double" or "triple" instrument. On the other hand, advertisements of second-hand lanterns should be avoided; they are frequently seen in weekly journals, and if answered too usually produce disappointment and disgust. A lantern must be good to be useful, and must therefore cost a fair price; a responsible firm should be dealt with, if satisfaction is to be guaranteed.

But it may happen that a parish really cannot afford to have its own lantern outfit: the only remedy in such a case is co-operation. Let three or four adjoining parishes combine and purchase a lantern for their common use, under the management of a small committee (the Vicars and churchwardens would suffice), to regulate its joint use by the interested parishes.

There seems to be no drawback to such a scheme except the unfortunate lack of power or desire for combined effort which so frequently stands between the officials of the various parishes in the same town. We venture to think that, once adopted, this plan would soon become popular. Another means of meeting want of funds is to devote the profits of entertainments—and why not an occasional collection in church?—to the "Parish Lantern Fund."

So much for the requirements of finance. It is next asked, What is absolutely necessary for a useful lantern outfit?

A single lantern, simple, and strongly made, with a lens of about six inches in focus. It may be lighted by oil or gas; if by gas, part is supplied from the ordinary main, the rest, which is oxygen, is used under very high pressure in a steel cylinder. These cylinders, with their fittings, meters, and regulators, can be hired, but a great deal of expense is saved in the end, especially in carriage to and fro, if they are purchased outright. There must be a screen on which to