

The Church Guardian,

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

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LAY WORKERS.

THE REV. J. F. KITTO, Vicar of Stepney, London, read a very practical paper on the above subject at the last English Church Congress. He took up the ordinary unpaid workers in a Parish, and gave some valuable suggestions. He shewed very plainly that parochial organization should be comprehensive enough to include every variety of work, and to include workers of all ages, stations and capacities. The field is the world, and there is employment for every kind of gift, while working for God is a means of grace which every pastor should provide for his flock. "There would be less apathy in our ordinary congregations if there were more work." The first aim then, he states, is to find a place for every one, and to give to every one his work.

The next point is to set forth certain principles. There must be love to God, and a desire to glorify Him as the motive, and the fact must be made plain that there is an infinite variety of work to do. Mr. Kitto wisely states that the simpler the machinery and the clearer the plans, the better. He advises the formation of an association for mutual strength, and periodical meetings "not too frequent, at which the work of the various branches might be reviewed, and new work discussed." He recommends a committee, elected from the members, as a parochial council, who could meet more frequently. The clergyman must be always on the watch for workers, and he advises him not to trust alone to general invitations from the chancel, but to let the appeals be personal and direct. In his own parish he has twenty-six varieties of Church work, and he offers any new candidate a choice from the list. Every fresh worker is a centre of influence and power, and every band of workers is a support and strength to the parish and the Church. There is no plan, he says, which carries out so far the influence of the clergyman, and we thoroughly endorse his opinion. We have yet to learn in this country the alphabet of parochial organization.

Beyond the vestry to look after, the financial matters of the parish, a choir, a Sunday school, and the inevitable "Sewing Society," there are but few attempts to provide work for each parishioner. It is true we cannot expect to see every one at work in a parish, but, at least, we have a right to expect that the communicants shall do some work, however humble or trifling, for the Church of God. Until we can reach some such point, we shall have to continue to lament the waste of power in our parishes. It is a difficult problem to solve, and the modes of solving it will vary with the circumstances of parishes, but a parish cannot be said to be fairly worked unless there is an attempt to provide work for its members.

Every one should be taught to feel that there is a place for him or her to fill, and work to be done suited to the capacity of all. In proportion as parishes try to realize this ideal, will success crown their efforts.

We have secured for our regular correspondent in the Diocese of Montreal a gentleman whose personal acquirements and means of information peculiarly qualify him for the position. His first instalment appears this week.

THE LONGEVITY OF CANADIAN BISHOPS.

It is worthy of remark that the late Bishop of Algoma, who passed to his rest in his 65th year, was, with the exception of Bishop Stewart, who died at the age of 62, the youngest of the twelve Canadian Bishops who have died since 1787. We have been unable to discover the age of Bishop Stanser when he died. He had been an invalid for some years. Our readers will notice, however, the remarkable fact that nearly all the earlier Bishops attained a greater age than the later ones. Certainly the first Bishops were called on to endure greater physical hardships in their extensive Sees, and it serves to show how the high pressure life of to-day, and the anxiety and burdens which modern life and problems entail on the Episcopate, tend to shorten lives. We append a table shewing the ages and Episcopates of the dead Bishops:—

	Consecrated.	Died.	Age.
Bishop Strachan, of Toronto	1839	1867	89
Bishop C. Inglis, of Nova Scotia	1787	1816	82
Bishop Bethune, of Toronto	1867	1879	79
Bishop Jacob Mountain, of Quebec	1793	1825	75
Bishop Feild, of Newfoundland	1844	1876	75
Bishop G. J. Mountain, of Quebec	1836	1863	74
Bishop J. Inglis, of Nova Scotia	1825	1850	72
Bishop Cronyn, of Huron	1857	1871	69
Bishop Fulford, of Montreal	1850	1868	65
Bishop of Algoma	1873	1881	64
Bishop Stewart of Quebec	1826	1837	62

The average age of these eleven men is 73 and 3-11th years, which is certainly a remarkable record of longevity.

In the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada the ages of the present Bishops are: The Metropolitan, 77; the Bishop of Niagara, 71; the Bishop of Montreal, 66; the Bishop of Huron, 64; the Bishop of Nova Scotia, 62; the Bishops of Quebec and Ontario, 56; the Bishop of Toronto and the Bishop Co-adjutor of Fredericton, 49. In the Ecclesiastical Province of Rupert's Land, the Bishops of Saskatchewan and Moosonee are 53, the Metropolitan is 49, and the Bishop of Athabasca is 46. In British Columbia, Bishop Hills is 65. We have not the ages of the Bishops of Caledonia and New Westminster, but they are young men in the prime of life, with many years of work, we trust, before them. The youngest Bishop ever consecrated for Canada was the present Bishop of Nova Scotia, who was appointed when only 32. The Bishop of Rupert's Land was 33 when appointed. The oldest person consecrated was the late Bishop Bethune, who was 67.

CONSOLIDATION.

Our remarks anent the recent Consolidation Dinner Party seem to have lashed into fury a certain individual, who, under the *nom de plume* of "Truth," has taken up over half a column of the Halifax Herald in coarse, personal abuse of this paper. Altogether, we have in the letter a sad evidence of what may be expected should the educational interests of our country ever be placed in such hands. Unsupported and unsustained assertion and denial, and unmannerly vituperation, will hardly prove effective in bolstering up a dying cause.

The statements in our article (with the exception of a printer's misprint, which substituted *Government for Legislature*) were substantially correct in every important particular.

TABLE TALK.

Is there not a danger of overdoing Christmas decorations in our churches? *He quid nimis* is a rule of universal application, reaching even to church decorations. When it comes to a number of persons working from early in December up to Christmas Day, and putting up miles of wreathing, besides any quantity of miscellaneous symbols and designs, one is tempted to ask whether this may not be a waste of time, and whether equally, if not more effective results might not be produced with an extravagant expenditure of time and labour.

Then would it not be well to have some general understanding as to the time when Christmas decorations are to be taken down? In some places it looks as though all available parochial energy had been expended in getting the decorations up, and so they have to be left to themselves to drop down. I have seen them in several churches, with faded splendour, up to Lent; and in more than one I have seen withered bits of wreaths and residuary Christmas texts all through Lent. True, their melancholy aspect was not unsuitable to the peni-

tential season, but they were not suggestive of devout thoughts.

A rule that has been given is this:—In no case let the decorations remain up beyond the Epiphany Sundays, and if these should extend beyond the Feast of the Purification, let the decorations be taken down on its vigil. This gives 40 days as the extreme limit, while it always removes the signs of Christmas joy before Septuagesima when, as has been said, the church enters the penumbra of the Lenten eclipse. But any particular time is of little consequence, if only some time were fixed. Is not this a matter in which uniformity of practice in each diocese would be secured by a recommendation from the Bishop. The most utterly Ritualistic depraver of the Episcopate would perhaps allow that this is one of those unprovided for matters, that even a Bishop might be trusted to regulate.

There are two or three subjects that come up at almost every meeting of a Synod, Diocesan or Provincial. About them all are agreed; in favour of them a vigorously worded resolution is usually passed, and then they take their place among the many matters about which good resolutions are made, but never acted upon. One of these is the "Permanent Diaconate," or, as it is sometimes called, the "extension of the Diaconate." A recent ordination in the Diocese of Ontario looks as though practical action may yet be taken in this much-voted-upon matter.

There are, at least, two practical difficulties in the way of carrying out any such scheme, and they may account in some degree for the little that has hitherto been done in that direction, though probably, like most other difficulties, they will be found surmountable when the attempt is honestly made to surmount them. One is that as a layman can, as a licensed reader, do everything (with the two exceptions of reading the Gospel, and ministering the chalice) that he could do as an ordained deacon, laymen will be slow to put themselves in the somewhat ambiguous position of "lay deacons," since they do not seem by so doing practically to increase their means of usefulness. The other is a more serious one. There is such a thing as "lay jealousy." Not infrequently when a clergyman has induced one whom he thinks suitable to present himself to the Bishop, he may find a good deal of jealousy as to "so and so being made so much of." And then great caution is required on the clergyman's part, for there is no doubt that a "clergyman's favourite" in the parish is not always an equal favourite with the people, nor does all the fault lie always with the people.

So long ago as 1826 lotteries were made illegal in England, and most civilized countries have since forbidden them. As fostering the gambling spirit, and strongly tempting those who cannot honestly purchase tickets to dishonest means of procuring them, they were found hurtful and demoralizing in a great degree. France was later than England in doing away with them, and it was there observed that their abolition was at once followed by a large increase in savings' bank deposits. It is a matter of extreme regret that some ecclesiasties in Quebec are starting a great lottery, and that the Quebec Provincial Government is to guarantee it and receive a percentage of the profits. Such patronage will give a false appearance of respectability to a scheme essentially discreditable and immoral.

OUTIS.

PARISH CHURCH LIFE AND PROGRESS.

At a recent social gathering, to which all members and adherents of the Church at Londonderry Mines were invited, the following paper was read by Capt. JOHN BRYANT, Vestryman, and obtained by his consent for publication, its practical character and judicious advice making it of general value. After a few introductory remarks, in which he congratulated the Vestry Clerk for having, by his invitation, brought so many chickens home to roost, Mr. Bryant proceeded to say:—

And now, my friends, let me ask what has brought us here, and for what purpose have we met together. I believe the intention was to afford an opportunity now at the commencement of the New Year to enjoy each other's company, to associate together, to become more intimately acquainted one with another, to know each other's wants, and to learn how we may help and assist each other, more particularly in promoting the interests of the Church with which we are individually identified. And, doubtless, no more appropriate time could be found than the present, as we enter upon a New Year and look back, and thank God for all the benefits He has bestowed upon us in the

past, to examine our consciences, and see if we have been pleasing the Almighty, or filling in a mission here below; for I believe we should all remember, as we say to ourselves that another year has passed, that it is not the year, but ourselves, passing from time into eternity, and our works will most assuredly follow us. Do not let us then, dear friends, as put by a clergyman in Montreal a few days ago, be "like the ass running a cider mill, going around and around all the day long, and landing at the same place at night." We want—we must have progress, and for this reason we desire the adherents of the Church in this place to make a noble, a grand and a united effort. As in union there is strength, so does the success of the Church depend not only upon the efforts of a few, but upon the efforts of the many.

Let us see now what constitutes an adherent of the Church. I will venture the statement that I entertain grave doubts if it means those only who pray for it, for in this case, I believe, churches would soon become as numerous as provision stores. But in this day of ours, perhaps it is an unfortunate one, when, may I be pardoned for saying so, little faith is apparent, I fear very few churches indeed would continue to exist if the people did not come forward and of their means contribute towards their support. Then it must be those of the latter, who bind the Church together and help to expand its beneficial influences, who are its real adherents.

It may be asked what benefit do we derive from the expenditure? Well, first, immediate benefit is seen in the great influence the Church has upon our moral characters. Just imagine the state of society if no churches existed? I believe it is quite bad enough with all the teaching we get; but would it not be infinitely worse if we were not constantly told that there is a hereafter; and by a proper control of our passions, are not many unpleasantnesses rounded off, and many otherwise rough and rugged paths made smooth? and by the knowledge that we are leading just and upright lives, are we not better fitted to enjoy, to the fullest extent, the blessings and the happiness to be derived from our sojourn here? Do you imagine that the blasphemer, the liar, the cheat, the profligate, or vicious man, enjoys real happiness? No, my friends, our consciences dictate the reverse. Then, in a moral sense, have we much reason to support an institution which is constantly warring against vice, and teaching men to flee from their evil ways?

In addition, we have the satisfaction of seeing the influence for good which the Church has upon the rising generation, upon our children; and apart from this, we all hope, sooner or later, to get to Heaven. Life would lose much of its charm, much of its sweetness and beauty—in fact, all that is worth living for—if we did not entertain this hope; and is not the Church constantly striving to consummate this? Indeed, were it not for the Church what hope would we have of ever reaching that haven of rest?

And, now, what are we doing personally to reach it? Possibly some do pray—I hope many do—for the pardon of their sins, without which, we know, we cannot enter that kingdom of eternal happiness. But are we also giving of our means as we ought to support the Church, the institution which is constantly pointing us in that direction? Or do we expect to gain Heaven free of cost? My friends, would it be worth having at that rate? Is not an article enhanced in value by its increased cost, and if Heaven cost us nothing, are we likely to value it very much? I am certain, and indeed recent experience teaches us, that you feel some sacrifice is necessary. Within the past two years the Church here has flourished in a manner never equalled in its past history. We desire that it should continue to flourish, that it should be second to none in the neighbourhood, financially, morally, and spiritually. To do this continued sacrifice is necessary. And I should just like to ask who amongst this assembly ever felt the poorer for what he or she gave to the Church? I will acknowledge that the reflection sometimes comes to my mind when the numerous demands are made upon my light purse, if looking at the requirements of my family, I ought to give so much, but I must say, and I thank the Almighty for it, that I never have yet felt the want of anything given for Church purposes? Neither have you, my friends.

Proudly do we call ourselves Churchmen and Churchwomen; and I venture to say none of us but would expect the Church to perform every office necessity required, and would even think it preposterous, indeed altogether out of character, if our minister did not visit our malarial bed-chamber if necessary, but God forbid that it should be required. Now, do we find every Churchman contributing for Church work? Perhaps so, but great lack of uniformity is manifest in the amounts contributed. Certainly, the bulk of sacrifice made by some must be small indeed. I ask, which one of you would hire out where there was no certainty of being paid? Now just take it home. Who of us would work one week for an individual if we were not certain of our pay? And this is just what all who do not come forward and promise to contribute regularly expect a clergyman to do. I recently read that through the introduction of bags, instead of plates for receiving the offerings of the congregations in some parishes in England, the amount of the contributions fell off considerably, copper coin taking the place of silver and gold, when a Liverpool clergyman preached upon the words: "Alexander the coppersmith has done