

The Rev. Cyril Ausgar Wilberforce Robins, curate of Lydd, and son of the rector of Holy Trinity, Windsor, has received the congratulations of the Prince of Wales for an act of conspicuous bravery during a recent gale off Dungeness.

A BEAUTIFUL specimen of a churchyard cross has lately been erected to the memory of the late vicar of Upton Bishop, Ross, Prebendary Havergal, D.D., a brother of the well-known writer, Miss Frances Ridley Havergal, the memorial being given by his widow and five children.

IN THE parish books at Prestwich, date 1736, the following entry occurs: "It is ordered that 13s. a year, and a new coat every other year, be given to George Grimshaw for his trouble and pains in waking sleepers in church, whipping out dogs, keeping children quiet and orderly, and keeping ye pulpit and church walls clean."

A MEMORIAL cross to the late Dr. Mackenzie, Bishop of Zululand, has been placed in St. Peter's Church, Raunds, Northamptonshire, by Mrs. Mackenzie. The cross is of brass, and bears the inscription, "In memory of Douglas Mackenzie, Bishop of Zululand." The deceased Bishop formerly resided at Raunds.

THE Dean of Worcester (Dr. Forrest) preached his last sermon at St. Jude's, South Kensington, as Vicar, on the Second Sunday in Advent, but he will be responsible for the duties until the end of the year. The actual value of the testimonial which was presented to the Dean on Wednesday evening was £2,300.

THE growth of the Church in the Diocese of California during the past ten years gives us great cause for thankfulness. A search of records shows that from 1881 to 1891 the communicants have increased 159 per cent.; this is most gratifying; and when we consider that the influx of immigration has been in a majority foreign and not over Christian, it must be said that the Diocese of California has done well.

An eminent Methodist divine, who had come back from a tour of observation of religious work in the far West, (U.S.) being asked his opinion of the methods of work, remarked that the Episcopalians possessed an advantage over every one else in that they send chosen men as Bishops, who go to stay and grow up with the country. While other ministers are here to day and away to-morrow, the Bishops of the Episcopal Church identify themselves with the life of the people, and their interests, and in this element of permanence there is a great power, while the character of the picked men who represent the Episcopal Church insures to them large influence.

A FAREWELL service was held in the second week in December, in the chapel of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, Delahay Street, Westminster. Five graduates of Trinity College, Dublin (who are going to form a community mission at Hazaribagh in the society's mission of Chota Nagpur, Bengal), another graduate of the same university, who is going to Bombay, and a son of the Bishop of Chota Nagpur, the Rev. S. H. Whitley, of Queen's College, Cambridge, who is about to join his father, took leave of the society. The Holy Communion was celebrated and an address given by the Dean of Worcester.

THE NATIVITY.

"GLAD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY."

Oh! glorious sight the Eastern sky adorning,
Oh! wondrous song, which woke that Christmas morning,
From countless angel voices, to the God who lay
A helpless infant, on a humble bed of hay.
The watching shepherds gazed with rapture at the sight
Of lovely beings thronging, in robe of dazzling white.
Soft shadowing wings unfolding to clear the morning air,
Never did human creatures behold a sight so fair.
"Glad tidings to the earth," the heavenly singers tell,
"The Saviour, Christ, is born this day, with men to dwell,
"The Lord, the Only Son of God, has come to earth from heaven,
"To live for men, to die for men, that all may be forgiven,
"That, reconciled through Him, they may God's children be for ever,
"Nor aught in Heaven or earth have power them all from His love to sever.
"In lowly stable dwelling the Virgin you will find,
"The Babe all meanly wrapped, though He is Lord of mankind."
Swiftly then sped the shepherds this wondrous sight to see,
And, in the Babe, they worship their God, on bended knee,
The Virgin Mary hushed her Babe, yet knew Him as her Lord,
For her pure, faithful heart believed God's holy angel's word,
And, pondering on this marvelous thing, she laid her Babe to rest
His hallowed head soft pillowed upon his Mother's breast.

DOROTHY FORSTER.

THE TRUE IDEAL OF THE CHURCH SUNDAY-SCHOOL: WHAT IS IT?

[A Paper read at the quarterly meeting of the Dunedin Church of England Sunday-School Union, in St. Matthew's schoolroom, Dunedin, New Zealand, by the Rev. E. T. Howell, M.A., Incumbent of St. Matthew's.]

All thoughtful members of our Church recognise the fact that, whatever may be the condition of the Church at any given time, such as the present, its strength or weakness twenty years after will depend entirely on the way in which, at the given time, the children of churchmen are being trained. Twenty years hence the life and vigour of the Church will be found not in ourselves, but in those whom we are teaching now. Ours may be still a guiding and even a controlling power, but the motive power, the influential energy, will be ours no longer. It becomes us, then, surely, to consider carefully and earnestly how we can so do our work in teaching the young, that they in their turn may be a power for good in the Church, and train others in like manner to be faithful in their generation.

Ours, then, is a great work, and we must try to do it well, because I am sure of two things: (1.) That unity, which is strength, unity without absolute uniformity, is the life of the Church itself, the very object for which Our Lord founded it, the supreme work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts; (2.) That, taking Sunday-schools as a whole, in town and country, there is no institution in the world in which there is such a waste of power and waste of precious opportunity.

Leaving these to another occasion, or to some abler person than myself, I will address myself now to the point I wish to speak of in this paper,—What is the true ideal of the Sunday-school?

If one might judge from casual inspection of average Sunday-schools, especially when the clergyman has not himself introduced and carefully supervised a regular scheme of teaching, the answer to this question might fairly be stated as follows:—The Sunday-school is the place to which many parents send their children instead of taking them to church—indeed, often instead

going to church themselves—as a method of observing the commandment to keep the Sabbath day holy. Others who do attend church, send their children to Sunday-school, leaving the whole further responsibility as to learning lessons, taking books with them, &c. to the teachers. A few take an active interest in their children's spiritual training. Such is the idea of the Sunday-school in the mind of parents. The teachers' idea, on the other hand, is that their scholars must learn the Catechism if possible, but, at all events, must say a verse of a hymn and read a chapter in the Bible and be told how that chapter teaches them what is right or wrong in a Christian. I am not, of course, speaking of the best Sunday-schools here, but of the average; and I say that in most that I have visited, the children learn next to nothing, unless they be specially well disposed and anxious to learn. And even then, they are only taught such a vague and indefinite Christianity as will be indeed a help to themselves, but will never make them intelligent and useful working members of their Church.

And that is in my humble opinion precisely what we ought to aim at in all our education of the young: to make them intelligent and useful working members of our Church. For, as churchmen and churchwomen, we lead a two-fold life—a life hidden and secret between ourselves and God, and a life of fellowship or communion with our brothers and sisters in Christ. And I make bold to say that the mere spiritual life can never be vigorous and healthy, unless it be fed by sympathetic common action with our fellow-members in the Church. The outer life of the Church must be sound if the inner is to be sustained, and the unity of the Church must be precious in our eyes, if the spirit of our Lord and Master is to dwell in us with power. One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one Spirit, and one Body; one Church visible, as well as one Spirit invisible: these and nothing less are our inheritance from Apostolic times. To make our children know the exalted privileges they possess as covenant members of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, and the solemn duties involved in such possession, ought to be the conscious aim of all Sunday-school training. How this can be attempted I would desire briefly to indicate.

(1.) The very little ones can learn nothing of the Church except in the simplest form. They must be taught, the moment they can speak distinctly, to say the Lord's Prayer, and from it to understand that they and all the little children about them in school were made God's children in baptism, and that they all are in God's sight brothers and sisters, and must be kind one to another. The simple story of Jesus' birth and childhood, and little hymns suited to their understanding will suffice for a year or two; after which

(2.) They can learn the Creed, which should be explained to them by means of simple stories from the History of the Creation and Fall, and the whole life of our Lord, including His death and resurrection. They will now be able

(3.) To learn the Commandments, and may be taught the nature of a Church by learning how God called out Abraham to live a separate life, and to be the father of a separate family, with a special and separate blessing; and how in the time of Moses God established, at the giving of the Ten Commandments, His first great Church, from which ours sprung. With this they should be taught the simple history of the foundation of the Church of Christ on the Day of Pentecost.

(4.) We will now suppose the child old enough to understand the Catechism with explanations. He may therefore learn it carefully, word for word, until he can say it through without a mistake, and answer simple questions on it. Meanwhile he will be taken through such a course of scripture study, from Old and New Testaments, as will fill in the outline sketched above of the nature and history of the Church of Moses and the Church of Christ; and, as he