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GRADED LESSONS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

We believe it would be beneficial if some of our readers would exchange views on this vexed question. There are so many Leaflets, Instruction Books, and Lesson papers, many of them admirable in arrangement and teaching, that it is difficult to select any course of instruction which will satisfy a number of schools. The point is to arrange a system which shall begin with a book like the *Calvary Catechism*, and lead the scholar step by step till in the Bible Class he closes his Sunday School life, with lessons on the Prayer Book and Church History. We are aware that lesson schemes are in use, arranged by Sunday School committees of various Dioceses, but they provide neither for the infant nor advanced classes. Church History and analysis of the Prayer Book appear to be entirely neglected. It would be well for our readers to take counsel together through our columns, and give the results of their experience. The writer of this article gives the arrangement in his own school for the coming year, not exactly as a model, but as that course which on the whole commended itself as in his judgment the best. The infant class is taught "The *Calvary Catechism*," and receives the "Little Learner's Paper" a weekly, costing six cents a year and containing a lesson with little lesson pictures. The intermediate classes are taught the *Catechism*, the teachers using either the Institute lessons on Bible History or on the *Church Catechism*. The junior classes study the "Lessons on the Life of our Lord," and the two senior classes take the lessons on the Acts from *Church Work*. The Bible Class devote part of the year to "Lessons on Early Church History," and the remainder of the year especially to the history of the Church of England. Next year they will take up the Prayer Book. It is hoped in this way to take the scholar through a course of instruction, comprising The *Catechism*, Bible History, Life of our Lord, The Acts, Church History, and the Book of Common Prayer. Perhaps others may be able to suggest a better plan. We know that many would be glad to receive suggestions, and there is room for a variety of treatment, considering the situation and capabilities of our Parishes, and the teaching material they can procure. Such a plan as sketched above, would be impracticable, perhaps, in a mission, where the clergyman is at his wits' end to secure persons willing to teach, who possess even rudimentary knowledge, and who is scarcely ever able to be present himself at the school. For such a Parish catechetical services for young and old seem about the only remedy. Drop ordinary sermons and catechize the few for the benefit of the many.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AN APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

A Sermon preached in St. Peter's Church, Sherbrooke, Q., by the Rev. Isaac Brock, M.A., on Sunday evening, Feb. 5, 1882.

"And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship; in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers."—Acts 2, xiii., R. V.

I have already shown you that our Church may lawfully claim to be an Apostolic Church because she continues steadfast in the Apostles' teaching.

Her Creeds, Articles and Formularies prove this. There is another point connected with this subject, which is far too important to be passed by in silence. It concerns not so much doctrine, as the mode in which doctrine is set forth.

Our Church is sometimes found fault with for the observance of the ancient fasts and festivals of the Catholic Church: Christmas Day, Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, Good Friday, Easter Day, Ascension Day, Whitsun-Day, and so forth: Whereas, if she did not observe these times and seasons in the calendar of her sacred years, we might have some reason to doubt, not whether our Church was apostolic in her doctrine, but whether she was apostolic in the mode and manner of setting forth Apostolic doctrine. I will explain what I mean.

You must have noticed that the Apostolic Gospel as unfolded in the New Testament, and as proclaimed by the Apostles, consists mainly in certain historical facts connected with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His holy Incarnation, His wonderful Birth, His manifestation to the eastern Magi, His public Life and Ministry, His Death, Burial, Resurrection and Ascension, His sending of the Holy Ghost. The narration of these historical facts occupies by far the larger portion of the Apostolic writings. The Apostolic Gospel unfolded in the New Testament, and proclaimed in those Apostolic sermons, brief outlines of which have been preserved for us in the Acts of the Apostles, consisted in the setting forth of these historical facts which are the basis of our Redemption.

Now what provision have the different Christian communities which, during the past three hundred years, have separated themselves from the Holy Catholic Church, made that these historical facts, which constituted the staple of Apostolic preaching, should be regularly and systematically brought before their members? As far as I can see—none. They have rejected the calendar of the Ancient Church, with its appointed round of fast and festival, they have rejected also the ancient Liturgies of the Church, and now therefore it rests with the discretion of their ministers, whether or no from January to December, they shall have any sermons preached on Christ's birth, Christ's temptation, Christ's death, Christ's resurrection, Christ's ascension, or Christ's mission of the Comforter.

It is far otherwise, as you know, in the Church of England. She carefully provides for the setting forth of the Apostolic Gospel under its Apostolic aspect, as consisting of certain great historical facts which gather round the Person of Our Lord, by the arrangement of her yearly round of fast and festival. This arrangement our Reformers found in existence at the time of the Reformation: this arrangement they most wisely retained, because it was not mediæval, but ancient and Catholic in its origin. She commemorates the great facts of redemption on her great days of religious observance. By the teaching of Collect, Epistle and Gospel, by proper preface in the Holy Communion, by proper Psalms and Lessons on the various days of the Church's year, we soberly and reverently connect the very passage of time with the great facts of our redemption.

Thus our Church's year, in its silent course, preaches the very Gospel the Apostles preached. Advent and Christmas-tide, Epiphany and Lent, Holy week, Good Friday and Easter Day, Ascension Day, Whitsun-Day and Trinity Sunday—the central Sunday of the Church's Year—and her whole round of fast and festival, as arranged in her Calendar, are our Church's provision that the Apostolic Gospel shall be set forth in the mode and in the proportions in which it was set forth by the Apostles.

You are not left, then, in the Church of England to the discretion of your ministers, whether the great historical facts which are the basis of our redemption, and which constituted the distinguishing feature of Apostolic preaching, shall be brought before you or not. They are brought before you in their regular order in the appointed services of our Church for her sacred times and seasons; and every faithful and loyal minister of our Church will most gladly follow in his sermons the track of the Church's teaching.

But steadfast continuance in Apostolic doctrine was not the only test of Apostolicity in the early Church. You read of those who, on the first Christian Pentecost, were admitted, by Holy Baptism, into the Christian Church, that "they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship." Continuance, therefore, in Apostolic fellow-

ship is as necessary as continuance in Apostolic teaching to a Church that claims to be Apostolic. Will our Church stand this second test of Apostolicity? Let us see.

And, first, what is meant by Apostolic fellowship? Fellowship means society. Apostolic fellowship, therefore, means Apostolic society. And what was the society called which the Apostles founded? It is called again and again in the Book of the Acts "The Church"—a well-known society, with recognized rulers and a recognized mode of admission, appointed by our Lord Himself, namely, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. To continue steadfastly in Apostolic fellowship, therefore, means to continue in the unity of that Church, that one Divine Society, which the Apostles of Christ founded. To leave that one visible and Divine Society—the Church of Christ—would be to depart from Apostolic fellowship.

Before passing on to consider the application of this important test to our own Church—the continuance in Apostolic fellowship—observe this: There may be continuance in Apostolic fellowship without continuance in Apostolic doctrine, and there may be the reverse of this—the continuance in Apostolic doctrine without continuance in Apostolic fellowship. I could very easily illustrate both sides of this supposition from the past history, and also from the present state of Christendom; but I forbear, as I wish to confine my remarks to our own branch of Christ's Church Catholic.

Does, then, the Church of England to which we belong continue steadfastly in Apostolic fellowship? Does she, in other words, abide in the unity of that Divine Society, the Church, which the Apostles founded? This, I take it, is simply a historical question; it is, in fact, a question not of doctrine, but of identity. I will state it:

Is the Church of England in England and in her daughter Churches in the Colonies and in the United States the same Church to-day that she was when planted 1800 years ago in ancient Britain by the Apostles, or by missionaries sent by the Apostles?

Our Roman Catholic friends totally deny this identity. They say that the Church of England, before the Reformation, was not the same as the Church of England after the Reformation. There we join issue with them; and ask—Is not a venerable building which in the lapse of ages had been daubed with untempered mortar, and disfigured by unsightly additions, which were no part of the original building, after the building has been restored, and these additions have been removed,—is it not the same building still? A man's face is covered with mire and dirt; he washes it, and it is clean. Does any one doubt the identity of the man's face before and after this washing? Naaman is a leper; he washes seven times in the Jordan, and is clean. Though leper no more, is he not the same Naaman still?

Such was the Reformation of the Church of England. It was the taking away of the Roman additions; it was the washing off the mediæval mire and leprosy which clung to our ancient Church. It was not the beginning of our Church; for that we must look back to the first Christian century.

Eusebius, the great Church historian who wrote in the fourth century, says that "some of the Apostles passed over the ocean to the British isles." At the beginning of the fourth century, we find a flourishing Church in Britain, a Church which contributed her quota to "the noble army of martyrs" in the Diocletian persecution, as the name in our Calendar of St. Alban reminds us: a Church which showed her continuance in apostolic fellowship by sending her Bishops to the general Councils of the Church Catholic. Church history records the interesting fact that the British Bishops declined the aid which the Emperor Constantine offered to all the Bishops of the Church to enable them to attend the General Council held at Nice in Bythania, A. D., 325.

The invasion of the heathen Saxons in the fifth and sixth centuries drove back the ancient British Church to Wales and Cornwall; it still, however, survived. When Augustine, sent by Gregory the Great, landed in England, in A. D., 597, he found the ancient British Church in the Western parts of the island with her bishops, priests, and deacons. The southern part of Saxon England, was converted by the labours of Augustine and his fellow-missionaries, the northern and middle parts of England chiefly by missionaries from the Ancient Irish and British Churches. After a time the Ancient British Church, and the recent

Saxon Church were united into one Church, the Church of the English people, a Church in communion with, but independent of, the Church of Rome.

So far, there had been no loss of identity; there had been decay, and revival, and fusion, but the unity of the Church had remained unbroken. The Church of England, under Egbert and Alfred, and all the Saxon and Danish Kings continued in the apostolic fellowship. She was in all essential respects one with the Church which apostles or missionaries sent by the apostles, had planted in Britain in the first century.

So matters continued till the Norman conquest, when our Ancient Church was brought in some degree under the power of the Bishop of Rome. For about four centuries and a-half the Roman Bishop continued to wield over our Church his usurped sway; though this was not allowed without strong protests from time to time, both from the Church and from the State. For four centuries and a-half our Church was in bondage; and during that period the mediæval corruptions of the Apostolic faith, the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints, crept into our Church.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century in A.D. 1534, Henry VIII. to suit his own ends, cast off the Papal Supremacy, and thus set our Church free from the usurped sway of the Bishop of Rome.

What followed? The gradual Reformation of the Church of England by the Church herself: her reformation in ritual and in doctrine. But the identity of the Church was unaffected by this wise Reformation, which was not a Revolution. Most of the ministers of the Church remained the same before and after the work of Reformation. Archbishop Cranmer, for example, was Archbishop of Canterbury, and Primate of the English Church before and after the great work of Reformation, which he was mainly instrumental in carrying out.

That the Church of England preserved her identity through the Reformation is proved by the fact, that, for the first twelve years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, all the Roman Catholics in England conformed to the Reformed Church of England. It was the atrocious Bull of Pope Pius V. deposing Queen Elizabeth from her throne, and absolving her subjects from their allegiance, which first broke the unity of the Church in England. Pope Pius V. was the author of dissent, or non-conformity in England: He set the people of England the example of separating from the ancient and Apostolic Church of the land.

Since the Reformation none will question that the Church of England, though not always faithful to her high vocation, has preserved her identity. The man who murdered his Sovereign, and the party associated with him, tried to destroy the Church of England: but she survived that trial, and others since then.

And to-day the great Eastern Church, and the Old Catholics of Western Europe, look up to the great Anglican Church as the most powerful National Church that happily combines a steadfast continuance in Apostolic fellowship.

May we seek to imbibe more of the Spirit of the Church of which we are members: amid the distractions and divisions of the world without, may we cleave to the Church which possesses fellowship with the Apostles of Jesus: and may we seek to exemplify the blessedness of this fellowship by striving to live in harmony and peace with all around us.

THE NEW VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

By REV. W. E. GELLING, BRIDGEWATER, N. S.

When this book came from the printing-press in the month of May last, it was earnestly received by the people. Already the sale thereof has almost ceased, the excitement is well nigh over, and the cause is known to all. Many were grieved to find that some 36,191 changes had been made in the sacred volumes; many so slight and uncalled for, as to irritate; and some so important as to be of a startling nature. The margin constantly suggests that many more changes could have been made. This is just the kind of statement that should not have been made at all; we read the Bible to conquer doubt, and here on every page doubt is suggested, and often where no doubt exists.

We have great cause for sorrow that the Revisers did not faithfully and consistently obey the short, few and wise rules laid down for their guidance, such as—To make as few changes as possible; that where they changed the Greek text, such alterations were to be indicated in the margin. That where the old Greek manuscripts differed, they were to