

If we walk not aright, the fault is ours. God has spoken. As we hear the Bible read, in the silence of our hearts let us answer with Samuel—"Speak, Lord for Thy servant heareth."

Notes and Queries.

SIR.—Will you please inform me why no celebration of the Holy Communion is held on Good Friday?
SIGMA.

Ans.—The Church has from very early times avoided offering the memorial of the sacrifice of Christ out of veneration to the Sacred Victim of the cross who offered Himself for us on that day, and because the Eucharistic service being of a joyful nature, seemed out of character with this day of desolation and grief. Formerly the sacrifice was pleaded on this day as on other days, but the consecration (as the festal element) was lacking, the celebration taking place with the Blessed Sacrament consecrated the day before. In the absence of reservation of the Sacrament, formerly practised, it suffices to read the Ante-Communion Office on Good Friday.

SIR.—Explain the difference between a Rite and a Ceremony.
ALIQUIS.

Ans.—The word Rite is the more general term and refers to the whole order of an act of worship, including forms of words and ceremonies rightly and duly performed. A ceremony is an external act of worship with its adjuncts, the bodily manifestations of worship and the ordinary means by which that worship is outwardly expressed to God.

SIR.—What are the duties of (1) Churchwardens, and also (2) Lay Delegates?
CHURCHWARDEN.

Ans.—(1) The Churchwardens are the guardians or keepers of the church and legal representatives of the parish vestry. Their main duties are (i) to present all matters happening in the parish contrary to the ecclesiastical laws; (ii) to keep in repair, to guard the various things belonging to the church, and provide all things necessary for divine service, and arrange for the accommodation of the congregation. Being a corporation, their corporate powers cannot be exercised by one without the consent of the other. Their accounts should be verified upon oath to the vestry or audited. All receipts should be deposited in a bank, if possible, and paid out by cheque signed by both Churchwardens. They are to be governed by the legal regulations and directions of the vestry. The Churchwardens are responsible for (i) putting up on notice board notice of Synod collections and table of fees. (ii) Providing Synod assessment. (iii) Seeing that the quarterly and other Synod collections are taken up and promptly remitted to Sec. Treasurer of Synod. The organist, the vestry clerk, the sexton, and other subordinate servants of the church are appointed by the Churchwardens.

(2) Lay delegates are elected by the vestry to represent the parish in Synod. It is their duty to attend Synod, and if any matters pertaining to their parish are brought before Synod, it is their duty to see that it receives justice. It is expected they will take a deep interest in all matters brought before Synod, and support all measures brought forward for the advancement of the Church in the Diocese, and endeavour to foster a spirit of harmony and good will.

Family Reading.

First Sunday after Easter.

WHITENESS.

A new life! Easter Day was a week ago, and yet I don't think the Easter feeling of newness and freshness has passed off yet. Beginning again, putting away old things, leading a fresher, better life than ever before, with more thought of heaven; all this is still in your mind, I hope.

There is yet another thing connected with Easter which I should like you to think about to-day. Perhaps the white flowers last Sunday have already put it into your mind, for it is—whiteness.

Don't you think we all have a sort of love for white things? Colours are beautiful, many of them, but there is always a pleasure in coming back to white, though it isn't a colour at all. It is lovely, and pure, and refreshing to the eye after one has been looking at glaring colours.

And white always seems to suit with Easter.

The dark cross, and the blood, and the gloom, and the black night are gone, and the clear morning has come, and the pure body of Christ is rising from the new tomb, and the angels in white are sitting one at the head and the other at the feet!

The angels came from God, and so their robes were white.

And all this Easter purity and whiteness is to teach us something.

There is a text or two from Revelations I should like you to read—

"They shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy."

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment."

Now think for a moment of a pure white robe, and that the robe is yours; and then imagine something more—that you yourself suddenly dashed black ink upon it!

You can't fancy yourself doing it. No, I dare say not. What a horrible black stain it would be, and what a shame to spoil what is so beautiful and white! You can't, do what you will, get it quite white again. The stain will never go quite away.

Now do you know that is exactly what SIN does! Makes a stain upon your soul. Bad thoughts, bad words blacken the whiteness and spoil it, just as ink spoils a white robe.

The word "filthy" is not a very nice word; but it is right to have a strong word to express a very bad thing.

Have you ever heard language call "filthy"? Well, it is expressive, for there is a sort of talk that stains the soul and makes it filthy. That is more horrible than any other kind of filth, and so it is just as well to know that.

Did you ever hear of the White Cross Army? It is an army of young men and elder boys, joined together on purpose to help each other fight against sins of the flesh—sins of impurity. The White Cross! It brings a beautiful idea before them. That they must keep from sins that defile the body, ay, and the soul too, because they belong to the pure and holy Jesus. And so their sign and symbol is His cross.

I believe it is a wonderful sight to see a large gathering of these White Cross soldiers (you might be one of them), and to hear them repeat solemnly their promise that they will strive to keep themselves pure.

There were two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, the other at the feet, where the Body of Jesus had lain."

If you had these words in your heart, do you think it would be possible for you to go into bad haunts, where there is evil in the very air; or talk about foul things, or use words that have a nasty meaning? I do say I believe you could not.

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment."

The trees are putting on their pure spring green, and how beautiful and fresh that is!

Even in London the dust and dirt haven't spoiled the leaves yet.

People are putting by their old winter clothes, and you are leaving off your shabby jacket that had got worn at the elbows. How nice it is to put on a new one that is clean, and sweet, and fresh!

So put off the old bad habits, for they are not pure and nice; get rid of them utterly. Throw the spotted garment away.

Here are two short prayers for you to say:—

"Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

"Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

And the Lord not only hears prayers, He answers them. He will wash away your old sins; He will give you the clean heart and the right spirit, if you only ask Him.

Arthur's Trial.

CHAPTER II.—Continued.

The Doctor marvelled at the boy's obstinate impenitence, and his late companions found plenty of bad traits in his character, now that his guilt was discovered. And Marriott? he was utterly miserable; a fierce conflict between right and wrong was going on within him; there was yet time to save himself from allowing the consummation of a most cruel act of false witness, but how could he?

Go and tell the Doctor? Impossible, he couldn't do it. Tell Mr. Archdale? No, he wouldn't do that. At length the day's work was over. Marriott began to dread the darkness of another sleepless night. He thought of Pierce alone in his disgrace, he thought of the Confirmation he would soon have to take a hypocrite's share in, he thought of the contempt of his schoolfellows if he confessed his guilt; but he remembered, too, a day when it could be hidden no longer, when "the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed," and at last he said, "I couldn't endure to live like this; I've been a brute to let it go so far. Let come what will, it can't be so bad as this; it's enough to drive me mad!" and he wiped away the perspiration from his forehead. Soon after there sounded a low tap at the Doctor's study door. He was engaged in writing to Mrs. Pierce—no very pleasant occupation. "What is it, my lad?" he asked as Marriott entered, in answer to his "Come in."

"Oh, sir, I can't bear it any longer. I took the money, not Pierce."

The Doctor started, and then there rushed to his memory the fact that Marriott too had a key which fitted Mr. Archdale's desk, and that Jem had put his name first as the boy he saw enter the school-room. Indignation arose in his heart, words of scorn to his lips, but he repressed them, and after one glance at the boy, he leaned his face upon his hands, without uttering a word.

"Oh, sir, I did mean to send Mr. Archdale the money back again, but"—and Marriott fairly broke down and sobbed. It was far worse to see the Doctor sit there so quietly and in such evident distress, than to bear any words of anger or contempt.

"My poor lad," he said presently, and there was something very kind in the sound of his voice. He thought then of an office he held, higher than that of head master of Wardsley Grammar School, he thought an instant of his ever-present Master, who accepted the tears of the woman that was a sinner, who spared an apostate Apostle, and he prayed Him to bring good even out of the blackness of evil to the guilty boy. "Tell me the whole truth, Herbert," he said firmly, after a pause, purposely calling him by his Christian name. Then in low, stammering tones, Marriott confessed that he had accidentally seen Mr. Archdale place the note in his desk, that he had for a long time been in debt for a fishing rod and tackle, and had gone on increasing his account with Holt till it amounted to more than three pounds, and that then the man had frightened him by threatening to complain to Doctor Grey if he was not paid before the fast approaching holidays. He had easily managed to get into the school-room, which was built apart from the house, and knowing that his key would unlock the desk, for he had once lent it to Mr. Archdale when he had mislaid his, he had quickly taken the money and paid the man that same afternoon. Of Mr. Archdale's former losses he knew nothing. The Doctor spoke long and earnestly to him, bidding him not to fear the shame and pain which were the just consequences of his sin, but to tremble and to grieve that he had so offended a Loving Father, whose voice had been all the while calling him to receive fresh gifts of His Love; and when at length the boy rose from his knees it was with a strange feeling of calm mingled with his shame and sorrow, for he felt that God had saved him that night from a fearful peril, and a genuine cry for mercy went up from his heart to heaven, which holy angels rejoiced to hear.

Leaving Marriott in his study, Doctor Grey went at once to release Arthur from his unjust imprisonment; he found him holding converse with the same little book which he had thrust into his pocket a few days before in the cloisters. It was a little worn copy of the "Imitation of Christ," his mother's gift, and he almost always carried it about with him.

"My son, always commit thy cause to me, I will dispose well of it, in due time." Such were the words he was reading when the Doctor entered. I shall not attempt to describe his joy when he found that his "cause" was indeed "well disposed of," nor the Doctor's self-reproaches, but Arthur's gladness was darkened by sorrow for Marriott, sorrow which forgot the injury done to himself, which forgave as he hoped to be forgiven.