

### Koutho' Department.

#### THE EPIPHANY.—TWELFTH NIGHT.

[From "Conversations on the Prayer Book."] ]

"Why is the Feast of the Epiphany called Twelfth Day, Eustace?" Willie asked his cousin

"Cannot you guess? Count and see: it is just twelve days after the Nativity; and in the reign of King Alfred, a law was passed, by virtue of which the twelve days after that day was made festival, and then, naturally, the last of all was most solemnly or merrily kept, and so arose our holiday, Twelfth Day.

"But why do we draw King and Queen then?" Willie asked.

"The custom is derived from the Magi, who were wise men, or, according to tradition, three Eastern kings, who came to offer gifts to our Saviour on the Epiphany. Tradition has given an individuality to each; and in most old pictures representing their adoration of the infant Saviour, we find one an old man, with a long beard, offering gold, and called Melchior; a very young man carrying frankincense, and known as Jasper; while the third is Balthasar, a Moor, whose gift is myrrh. It was in memory of these royal Gentiles that the Twelfth Night King was first chosen; and I suppose his Queen is merely an imaginary addition.

"I like to hear these old customs so much!" Willie exclaimed. "Can you not tell me any more, Eustace?"

"There was an old custom observed in Devonshire formerly, but I dare say now it is abolished. On the eve of Epiphany, the farmer and his men used to go to the orchard, and at each of their best trees drink a health in cider, three times, with these rhymes:

Here's to thee, old apple tree,  
Whence thou may'st bud, and whence thou may'st blow!  
And whence thou may'st bear apples snow!  
Hats full! caps full!  
Bushel, bushel, sacks full!  
And my pockets full, too! Huzza!

Something of the same sort was done in Herefordshire and called Wassailing. Twelve small fires, and one large one, in honor of Christ and the twelve Apostles were lighted on the highest ground among the farmer's wheat fields, and then the farmer and his men pledged one another in cider, round the fires, going home to a merry supper; after which one ceremony was to hang a cake, made with a hole in the middle, on the horn of the best ox; then he was made to toss his head and if the cake was thrown in front, it was the mistress's perquisite—if behind, then the bailiff claimed it."

"What fun!" Willie exclaimed.

"Yes, but Willie dear, we must not forget the real solemnity of the day itself, while we dwell on the quaint, merry amusements which have arisen in commemoration of it. Let us look at the Services for the day."

"The Athanasian Creed is to be said, I remember," Willie answered, "and there are proper Lessons. Let me see. The first for the morning is Isaiah, sixtieth chapter."

"Which is full of prophecy of the 'bright shining Light of the word,' as its first words show: 'Arise, shine, for thy Light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.' And then the Epiphany, or Manifestation, and the adoration of the Magi is foretold: 'The Gentiles shall come to Thy Light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.' The first Evening Lesson, also from Isaiah, foretells the same thing: 'I will also give Thee for a Light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My Salvation unto the end of the earth. Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and His Holy One, to Him Whom men despise, to Him Whom the nations abhorreth, to a Servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship. And again: 'Kings shall be Thy nursing fathers; they shall bow down to Thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of Thy feet.'"

"The second Morning Lesson does not tell anything about the Magi," Willie observed.

"No: it tells of John Baptist announcing the Star that was soon to shine; and in the evening He is found manifesting Himself by a miracle, changing the water into wine. The Epistle is taken from St. Paul, who, you know, was specially the Apostle of the Gentiles, to whom grace was given that he 'should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,' and who conveys the glad tidings that 'the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of God's promise in Christ by the Gospel.' You know, Willie, we are all Gentiles."

"We Gentiles?" Willie exclaimed in astonishment.

"Yes, indeed; all who were not Jews were Gen-

tiles; and therefore the Epiphany concerns us as much as it did those Magian kings; for we too were without the covenant given to the children of Israel."

"I had never thought of that," Willie answered thoughtfully.

"In the Gospel you have the account of how the star in the East appeared to the wise men, and they following it until it stood over the manger where the Infant Saviour lay, came to Him and worshipped Him, offering gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Herod had bidden them to return, and tell him when they had found Christ, pretending that he, too, would come and worship Him, meaning to kill Him really. But God forbade the wise men, in a dream, to return to Herod, and they went home by a different way. Now, Willie, just read the Collect for the Epiphany, and see how it embodies the spirit of all these different passages of Scripture."

Willie read: "O God, who by the leading of a star didst manifest Thy only Begotten Son to the Gentiles, mercifully grant that we, who know Thee now by faith, may after this life have the fruition of Thy Glorious Godhead, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

"So ends the festivals included in Christmas-tide, Willie, and we must with the old song

'Bid Christmas sport good night,  
And next morrow every one  
To his own vocation.'

### Selections.

The confirmation of the new Bishop of London took place on Thursday, Nov. 20. The Bishop, having accepted the election made by the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, signed the schedule presented to him, and then, accompanied by the Vicar-General and the other officials, proceeded to Bow Church, where the usual ceremony of confirmation was gone through. The usual challenge to objectors to come forward being made by the Apparitor, and not receiving any reply, Dr. Tait took the customary oaths of allegiance, supremacy, and canonical obedience, and against simony, all of which were impressively pronounced by his lordship, kneeling. The Vicar-General then read and signed the sentence of confirmation, with which the ceremony concluded.

On Sunday the Bishop elect was consecrated, together with the Rev. Henry Cotterill, Bishop-designate of Grahamstown, at the Chapel Royal, Whitehall by the Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by the Bishops of Chichester, Lincoln, and Carlisle. The Bishops of Jamaica and Rupert's Land were also present. Drs. Tait and Cotterill were presented to the Archbishop for consecration, by the Bishops of Chichester and Lincoln. There was full cathedral service, and a large proportion of the congregation remained to partake of the Holy Communion with the right rev. prelates. The sermon was preached by the Rev. G. E. Lynch Cotton, master of Marlborough School, and formerly assistant-master at Rugby when Dr. Tait was head-master. The text was taken from St. John, chap. xvii. v. 20, 21; and the chief subject of the discourse was the present want of unity in the Church, "because any regrets for the loss of a wider unity would now, at least, be unprofitable." As in matters of thought and speculation, or in politics, men might be generally ranged into two parties, he proceeded to urge—

"It is no less true that, in theology, Christians have been ranged from the first, mainly under two divisions—those who incline to a system of authority, discipline, and subordination, and, therefore to a worship more or less formal and ceremonial; and those who, in a freer spirit, prefer a simple outward service—a religion more personal, independent, and unlettered. In a worthy state of things these shall exist side by side, each modifying and correcting the other. We see traces of both in the New Testament, and if St. Paul preaches above all things the paramount necessity of a personal faith, the sanctity of individual conscience, and the spiritual communion of each soul with God, it is evident that he does not neglect to inculcate order and discipline, and strongly enjoins us to be tolerant towards those whose view of outward observances differs from our own." After remarking in effect that there was no alternative between submission to Papal authority and mutual toleration in non-essentials, the preacher continued, "The traces of compromise and a desire of comprehension are visible in the foundation, the constitution, and the services of our Church. While we praise God in the psalms which Ambrose and Augustin chanted in the Basilica

of Milan, and can trace our prayers and liturgies to the great Popes—Gregory and Leo, we yet can refer other parts of our service to the influence not only of English but even of foreign Protestants. Yet, in spite of these undeniable facts, our present practice bears few signs of toleration and forbearance. The harmonious action of the Church—its warfare against wickedness and unbelief—is interrupted by unseemly disputes on forms and decorations, and doctrinal subtleties and doubtful points of disputation are recklessly moved and acrimoniously contested. No doubt it is said that this is but a sign of the earnest activity to which God in His mercy, has roused the Church from the torpor of the last century; and that, because men care more for faith and duty, therefore they are so much at variance amongst themselves. But must we then acquiesce in the conclusion that Christian earnestness is incompatible with Christian charity—that our Lord's prayer for his followers can never be accomplished—that their unity is a fantastic dream? It is melancholy and disheartening if, in curing one evil, we must rush into its opposite, and can never combine tolerant forbearance with true piety and enthusiastic devotion." After stating there were many points of doctrine and ritual observance on which a divergence might well be tolerated, the rev. gentleman proceeded—"While we thank God for every new symptom of increased activity, we cannot but lament that less interest and excitement is shown in the struggle against positive wickedness than in some disputes about a cross, a vestment, or a ceremony; and such regret is most consistent with the principles of a Church which numbers amongst its ministers on the one hand, Andrewes, and Herbert, and Law, and Wilson; on the other, Latimer, and Leighton, and Newton, and Cecil; while by the side of both are ranged men eminent in speculation and philosophy—Hooker, and Cudworth, and Bekeley, and Butler. It is no fault in its constitution, but rather its great glory, that Ken found in it so much apostolical order, and that he only left it at last with hesitation and reluctance from a political, not an ecclesiastical, scruple; that Wesley so far acknowledged its evangelical truth that he never deserted its communion though he struggled against its discipline; that on the revival of its life and energy in these latter days it has still asserted its old character, still winning to a living faith in Christ men of diverse habits, and tastes, and feelings, and reckoning among those who have lived and died in its service, Heber, and Simeon, and Henry Martin, and Arnold, and Hare."

Having briefly applied his argument to the diocese of Grahamstown, the preacher drew a fearful picture of the responsibilities connected with the diocese of London.

A number of official General Orders published from the Horse Guards during the last few days, indicates that the whole system of our army organisation is undergoing an overhaul under the eye of its new Commander-in-Chief. The alterations as yet made are chiefly useful minutiae; but other more fundamental changes are said to be in progress, amongst these being a plan for the establishment of a school of staff officers, and the distribution of staff appointments by merit. With this view it has been proposed that before any officer is appointed to the staff he shall undergo a proper course of instruction, under officers of great experience, in the several duties he will be called upon to perform. In order that none but really efficient officers may be selected for the appointments, it is suggested that the general officers at each of the half yearly inspections be directed to call upon the commanding officers of regiments to bring forward the name of any officer under his command who may have given proofs of superiority in his profession over the other officers in the regiment. Should the General commanding-in-chief deem the officer, (after a preliminary examination) so brought forward to his notice, a fit candidate for a staff appointment, his name will be placed on the list, and, as vacancies occur, the senior officer on the list will undergo a course of instruction, at the public expense, to qualify him for the staff. The establishment for instruction is proposed to be limited to about fifty officers, and every facility will be given to the candidates for acquiring a perfect knowledge of their duties, without any expense to themselves. A properly qualified general officer of great experience would be appointed to examine the whole of the officers in the establishment periodically, when the most efficient officer would be selected, and appointed to the first vacant staff appointment. One of the orders issued prescribes the use, in rifle exercise, of a new 'snap cap,' to prevent breakage of the nipple of the gun, at the same time.