

large bodies of Church workers ought to be recruited. There is no reason why, in every parish, a reading society should not be at work similar to the old "mutual improvement" societies, with the essential difference that it ought not to minister to the vanity of its members. A high-class Bible class is the ideal; call it a Divinity class, and it will be well attended by studious young men and women. We are far from believing that catechising in church should take the place of the Sunday-school; it should, on the contrary, be supplementary to the Sunday-school, for it is nothing (in these days of secular education) without the Sunday-school. Once let us show ourselves desirous of improving our Sunday-school system, and abundance of ways and means will present themselves.—*The Family Churchman*.

### THE TRISAGION.

Of all the Old Testament intimations of the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, and they are not few, the most wonderful and suggestive in many respects is the Trisagion in the Vision of Isaiah. It occurs in the VI. Chapter where he narrates his call to the prophetic office. It was in the temple and God was there "high and lifted up" with the six-winged Seraphim adoring Him. And one cried unto another: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory," and the very door posts moved in harmony and the house was filled with smoke. How perfectly Christian this appears from its use in a slightly different form in the Revelation, where the four living creatures "rest not, day and night, saying holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."

No one ever really listens to this without yielding to a sense of mystery and divinity. We are impressed even without knowing why with this name of God coming from afar.

The Jews were early conscious that the existence of God was not a mere barren unity. He was more than an idea to them. They felt that in Him was at least a union of attributes, and almost rose up to a conception of more than one person in the Godhead. But as Christ needed to come to declare God, so Christianity has first fully declared the Trinity, not as inventing it, or manufacturing it, but as recognizing it in Revelation as essential to our idea of God. There are three Holies, and but one Holiness. This exactly gives us our Christian definition of three divine Persons, of one divine substance or Godhead. Perhaps it would be better to take this word in another spelling as Godhead.

Without exhausting at all the blessed suggestiveness of this mysterious name, let us try to find out some of its bearings. This we can do by keeping fast hold of three ideas peculiar to our religion among all others, three to correspond with the threefold name, and taken from the Trisagion in the Revelation. And first, ours is the only *Holy* God. The gods of other religions have nothing attributed to them like the holiness of Jehovah. The divinities of the Greeks were decidedly immoral, not as the stories of mythology are vulgar inventions travestying the best ideas of the Greeks, nevertheless their gods are certainly immoral. They have no holiness in themselves and demand no holiness in their worshippers. The same is true to a greater or less extent with our religions. Buddhism indeed seems to demand holiness, but something entirely negative and different from Christianity.

Next, ours is the only *Almighty* God. With the ancients each god had a specialty. There were some things he could not do. Even Olympian Zeus obey the Fates. Some were gods of the hills and some of the valleys. They needed rest and while they napped their plans were up-

set by heedless mortals. Only in the unity of the Godhead dwells omnipotence.

Third, ours is the only *Everlasting* God, which was, and is, and is to come, the Alpha and the Omega. The Greek gods were born. There was a time when they were not, there was a time when the cry came, "great Pan is dead." But the God of revelation is from Everlasting to Everlasting.

These three ideas are related thus. Holiness is power. Sin is death, but holiness is life. Perfect holiness means perfect power, and an endless life. It is uncreate, it cannot fail, it is Holy, Holy, Holy.

### THE TRISAGION IN DEVOTION.

Twice in every full morning service the Trisagion is sung. Once in the *Te Deum*, which is the climax of the Matin office, once in the Holy Communion. In both it is the song of men and angels. Devout musicians sometimes find it in the evening *Magnificat*, thus, "He that is mighty hath magnified me and Holy, (Holy, Holy) is His Name." It was used as a form of the *Kyrie* by the Greek Church, "Holy Lord God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy upon us," and thus is undoubtedly at the bottom of those profound petitions in the Burial Office. "Spare us Lord most holy, O God most mighty, O holy and merciful Saviour, Thou most worthy Judge Eternal, suffer us not at our last hour, for any pains of death to fall from Thee." From the heights of praise to the humblest supplication, still the Trisagion has its place. And as prayer and practice should go together, thus suggests the Church's old introduction to her mysteries, "Holy things to Holy persons."

### THE TRISAGION IN PRACTICE.

The Divine word is, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Christ says, "I have given you an example." The three ideas in revealed religion mentioned above may seem too high for us, so our imitation may be of Christ's human holiness. He is described thus, "Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens." This text may be explained thus, To be holy, is to be harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, that is, to be meek, pure, and consecrated, or self-devoted. The other point comes in as a result. Holiness is in Christ, and may be in us "made higher than the heavens." The best imitation of the Trisagion we can make is to be meek, pure, and self-sacrificing, with Holy Faith, Holy Hope and Holy Charity, for these *abide*, and one, at least, *never faileth*. The man who loves Christ shares His eternity and His power.—*The American Church Times*.

### TRINITY-TIDE.

Is the commemoration of a truth not of an event. To some, no doubt, the idea of the three persons in one God is almost meaningless, incomprehensible, and they are, not enthusiastic enough to rejoice in the observance of a Trinity Sunday.

This will, as a rule, be the case with those to whom the Holy Trinity is a mere theory, and not a living fact which makes a difference to every day life.

We only value things for their usefulness. If they are not useful, we dispense with them cheerfully.

It is the same with religious truths. We may assent to them but if they are not of practical use to us, we do not really believe them. We only keep them, like a cabinet of curios, to be brought and played with on show days and Sundays. No man will really "keep the Faith" who cannot use the Faith. He will be willing to let go just so much of it as does not become a part of his daily life.

Apply this to the doctrine of the Trinity. The theological definitions of the Athanasian

creed are in themselves merely a form of carefully chosen words. But when we remember that the revelation which the words embody gives us a right (1) to call God "My Father," (2) to regard the man Jesus, who died for us, as God the Son; and (3) to breathe the Spirit or breath of God as the life of our own souls; here is something which makes a difference to us, which enters into our practical life, and makes our life worth living by removing it from the sphere of the temporal to the eternal.—*The Church Record*.

### SLOTHFULNESS IN RELIGIOUS LIFE.

It seems a very easy matter for us to neglect opportunities of worship and work. We actually excuse ourselves from access to the means of grace, the life of the soul. Any excuse will do. A slight ache is enough, a suspicion of rain, a feeling of lassitude.

Yet what was the complaint against the man with one talent? Slothfulness.

Why were the foolish virgins shut out? For want of taking trouble.

What was wrong with Dives? Simple neglect of the beggar at his gate.

What was the fault of those who were invited to the marriage supper? "They all with one accord began to make excuse."

What is one of the most glaring faults in a young man entering upon a career in the world? Slothfulness, unwillingness to take trouble. A man with such a fault loses place after place. He does not get on, and everybody says it serves him right.

Truly "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light."

The moral is obvious. It is summed up in the inevitable, relentless "too late."

### GOD'S THOUGHTS, OR OURS?

"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My thoughts higher than your thoughts."

Can we do better for ourselves than God would do for us if we would let Him?

Did you ever take the parable of the laborers in the vineyard as a picture, drawn by Christ Himself, to illustrate our Heavenly Father's loving thought and care for His own? The lord of the vineyard hires laborers, and sends them into his vineyard at various hours of the day. At last, when the day is over, he bids his servants "call the laborers and give them their hire, beginning with the last"; and, to the surprise and indignation of those who were first hired, he makes those who came at the eleventh hour equal to them, who had "borne the burden and heat of the day." In answer to their indignant expostulation, he says to one of them, "Friend, did you not agree with me for a penny?" and then goes on to tell them that his thoughts for them had been, not a penny a day, but a penny an hour. The last had left it to him to do what he thought right, but they, afraid to trust him, had bound him down to their own low ideas of good, and thus had interfered with his carrying out his own wonderful thoughts for them, which were so much higher and better than theirs as to be entirely beyond their comprehension.

Do we not see in these suspicious, distrustful men a picture of ourselves? Is not this a fair representation of our own way of dealing with our Father in Heaven? And so our lives are often joyless and full of discouragement, for He cannot "do many mighty things for us because of our unbelief."—*The Parish Visitor*.

Truth is the shortest and nearest way to our end, carrying us thither in a straight line.