

"God, looking through the human eyes, and shedding human tears; God hearing with human ears, and touching with human hands. It was very God and very man; not a mixture of the two, but the full perfection of both. It is not a distant love, but love which has sought nearness of abode. Man first wanted to ascend and be as God; God to remedy man's evil case, descends and becomes man." (Bonar.)

Surely this "Good news from a far country" brought to the world on the first Christmas, might well inspire the jubilant songs of angels and the heartfelt thanksgiving of those whom the SON of GOD thus came, in great humility, to redeem.—Selected.

CATECHISING.

Another serious cause of regret is to be found in the too limited attention given to such regular and thorough catechising of the young as the Church in her wisdom enjoins, and would fain have encouraged and practiced in all places. The clergy, I am happy to say, are giving increased attention to this primary and essential part of our work, and yet more can be done, as well at home as in church before the congregation. To many faithful women are we largely indebted for their loving work for the young, but no other agency can supersede what should be done in the family, the family, the first and moulding school of life. The Sunday-school was not designed to do it, and can never take the place of such instruction, and when it is remembered how many of the teachers are too young themselves, and otherwise incompetent to interest and thoroughly instruct children, the prevailing want is the more to be regretted. The rubrics following the Catechism are therefore most seriously commended to the study and observance of ministers, parents, and sponsors. Too much thought, it is to be feared, is given in connection with the Sunday-schools, to mere adjuncts and external appliances of a sensational, if not demoralizing, tendency, as gowns, prizes, processions, dress, and competitive contributions, which cause heart-burnings, jealousies, a class feeling most unhealthful and to be deplored, and withal, there is too much of mere pomp and vanity in much that is to be seen.—Bishop Greng.

HIGH, LOW OR BROAD?

A clergyman is often met by new-comers with the question; "Is your church High, Low or Broad?" One of our exchanges very happily speaks for his own parish, and, and, in doing so, voices the sentiment of the great body of the clergy all over the land. He answers:

"If obedience to the faith and discipline of the undivided church be 'high,' our parish is high and getting higher. If personal holiness and an exclusive trust in our Lord Christ for Salvation be 'low,' our parish is low and getting lower. If large, inclusive views of truth, and the keeping in touch with life in all its modern phrases be 'broad,' our parish is broad and must be broadened.

But why have 'ifs' and parties in the Living Church? A man who has any power to reason—nay, a man who can read English, and will read it—must see that the prayer book of our church is (1) Catholic, (2) Evangelical, (3) inclusive and adaptable.

That ringing noble name, a churchman, means that a man possessing it is not 'high' only, for that were instability; nor 'low' only, for that were narrowness; nor 'broad' only, for that were shallowness; but that as a citizen of that City 'the length and breadth and height' of which are equal in the Angelical survey, has in himself the solid, stable, cubic symmetry of a perfect nature."—North Dakota Churchman.

FAITH IN FIRST PRINCIPLES.

Preaching the University sermon at Cambridge the other day, the Rev. Canon Newbolt, the successor of Dr. Liddon as Canon of St. Paul's, London, chose the above subject for his discourse, and the first Commandment for his text. The following extracts from the sermon are suggestive:

"The setting up the presence of God. It is necessary to insist on this in the very forefront of Divine morality, because to be quite sincere, this Divine Commandment appeals to us, not so much as to the question whether we shall have many gods, but whether we shall have any God at all. The worldly spirit invades our very soul; it shapes our thoughts, it dominates our conversation, it colors our estimates of the phenomena of life. We know a great deal of secondary causes, we observe, we compare, we generalize, we reduce. But we stop short of the Person first called. In a verdict given the other day in the case of a death by lightning, the jury brought in—"Death from exhaustion following shock caused by being struck by lightning," on which the coroner dryly remarked: "The old verdict used to be 'Death by the visitation of God.'" "An extraordinary coincidence," if he believed in it at all, would probably be the comment of the modern journalist, instead of the simple statement of the old prophet: "now God had prepared a great gulf to swallow up Israel."

My brethren, it is a serious thing when men cease to feel God, or in the words of the Commandment to have a God, when His light dies to them out of sacrament and service, and the methods of the Church, because it is paving the way to a great apostasy.

Every unreal prayer, every neglected sacrament, every careless communion, every misspent Sunday—is just causing you to turn your back a little more upon God. And that sense of leaning upon something which is in you, rather than in Him, will drive you away to look at the kings of the nations, to call privilege peculiarity, and service servitude, and restraint slavery, and the great Church system a failure. It will penetrate to your own inmost lives. Directly the word or the service of God becomes unreal to us, we should feel peculiar—the old familiar topics will seem strange to us. We shall toss aside the ancient history of Balaam, or the troubles of Daniel, or the sins and punishment of God's people, and betake ourselves to the *Times*. We shall feel that if a service is to be palatable to all, that it must at least be wrapped up in good music, otherwise it will seem strange to be found frequently at church, when there is so much that is exciting in the world around us. But a person who knows what it is to have God, does not stop to ask about or think of such things; he feels his blessings not his isolation, his privileges not his peculiarity.

CONTEMPORARY CHURCH OPINION.

The Living Church, on the International system of Sunday School Lessons:

"The old Puritan prejudice against the Church Year dies hard, but it is surely dying, and the leaders of the lost cause might as well yield to the inevitable. The last stronghold of this antagonism seems to be the "International System of Sunday School Lessons." The people and the press of most of the denominations are in favor, more and more, of celebrating the great festivals of the Church, and this will lead up to the keeping of the fasts; but the "old timers" who have not learned anything or forgotten anything for half a century, seem determined to put off as far as possible what seems to them the evil day of "Romish observance." Notwithstanding

one of the largest of the Protestant bodies, the Lutheran, observes the whole round of the Christian Year, these ignorant and obstinate Romophobists persist in calling it "Romish."

Last spring, *The Christian at Work*, an undenominational paper, took a decided stand against the course pursued by the editors of the "International Lessons." The Easter leaflets had not a line or a text relating to the Resurrection, "while a Boston Lesson Quarterly could offer nothing better as a substitute for the glorious theme of the Resurrection on Easter Sunday, than a perverted application of Isaiah v: 11-23, grouped together as a temperance hotch-potch, than which Pharaoh's lean kine were not more desiccated and juiceless." The same paper, in another paragraph, protests "against the pestiferous practice in the Sunday school series of jumping all about from Galilee to Gibeon—from lessons in the Gospels to scrappy lessons [?] on Rehoboam, Ahab and Elijah, Gehazi, Elisha, and so on."

It seems, however, that these leafleteers are joined to their idols, and that no improvement is discernible in their scrappiness. *The Episcopal Recorder* (Reformed) now takes up a lament over this defect, and "confidently looks for improvement." This is the way *The Recorder* puts it:

"At the present season, when the parents of our children are frequenting the shops, and are busily employed in selecting Christmas presents, and the children are filling their banks with pennies for the same purpose; and the thoughts of the vast majority of Christian people are contemplating the celebrating of the birth of the world's Redeemer, in our Sunday schools the International Lessons are directing our minds to the solemn scenes of the dying hours of the Saviour."

The Reformed Episcopalians, in taking with them the Church Year, retained a portion of their Catholic heritage; a little leaven which will, let us hope, leaven the whole lump, until they return to keep the feast in the old home.

New Zealand Church News says of the Press and Pulpit:

We sincerely trust that those who agree with us will not be content with an inactive sympathy, but that some will show an active interest in the paper by writing for it, and others by drawing attention to it and obtaining subscribers. The clergy, especially, have opportunities for so doing. It is scarcely creditable to the Church that a newspaper of this kind should receive comparatively little support, while Nonconformist papers are, for the most part, encouraged and assisted by the warm support of their respective connexions. Although the Pulpit is a powerful agency for moving mankind, there appears to be more and more reason every day for not disregarding the power of the Press. It is, perhaps, not too much to affirm that the power of the Press is fully equal to that of the Pulpit, for the Press reaches those for whom the Pulpit, has no attraction. The educative power of Ecclesiastical newspapers in particular is a strong factor in life to-day; and the wisdom of duly exercising this power is not unobserved by the leaders of denominational Christianity throughout the world. The Church, therefore, has a duty clearly defined in her obligation to teach and instruct her people by bearing witness to the truth in the pages of her newspapers, no less than in her pulpit homilies. While so much literature of all kinds denying the truth of her message to the world is being poured out among men, and while so much is being published in depreciation of her authority, it is imperative that her clergy should use any legitimate weapon for defending her position. These are days in which an enemy with modern implements cannot be repulsed by adhering only to the ancient methods.