

rolled so mechanically from the lips, and that when I was there before I had heard just the same petitions, uttered in just exactly the same tone of voice. The prayers seemed to go over just the same ground too; only with this difference from the prayers in our church, that our prayers are simple and short, and in the very language of Scripture, and theirs often long, and wearisome, and rambling. I like a prayer that is connected, and simple and devout, and I like when I pray to know what is coming. But when I am there my mind is all the time in suspense, and as it were on the strain to catch on the fly what the minister says, and to follow his random utterances."

"And then as to coming from the heart, James, that depends entirely on the devotion and earnestness of him who prays. An extempore prayer may be the driest of dry forms, and the prayer that has been repeated a thousand times before may just come out as fresh and full of power as if never uttered before. From the heart? Yes our prayers are from the heart; from the heart of God's inspired saints like David! from the very heart of our Lord Himself, as in the Lord's prayer."

James—"Well, John, there is truth in what you say, and I never thought of that before. Of course it is possible to repeat in an extempore prayer, and to be hearty in a written one. And now you remind me of it I remember how last Sunday when the parson was repeating the General Thanksgiving, and came to the words 'that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we shew forth thy praise, not only with our lips but in our lives,' that I was so touched that I resolved there and then to consecrate myself anew to Christ, and serve Him with my heart."

John—"And as to what you said, James, about going over the same words, it depends a good deal on what kind of words we go over. Our blessed Lord repeated a prayer three times, saying the same words, Matthew xxvi, 44, and it is surely right to follow His example, especially when we use the very prayer He taught His disciples to use."

James—"Well, I never thought of that before. Really, I think I will go with you to church to-morrow."

John—"Do, and some other time I will tell you a few things that will really show you that we ought to be thankful to God for our Church of England

Liturgy. Why it was a Baptist minister, Robert Hall, who said: 'I believe the chastened fervour of its devotion, the majestic simplicity of its language, and the evangelical purity of its sentiment have combined to place it among the very first rank of uninspired compositions.'"

Halifax, N. S.

DYSON HAGUE.

CONSIDER THE LILIES HOW THEY GROW.

He hides within the Lily
A strong and tender care,
That wins the earth-born atoms
To glory of the air;
He weaves the shining garments
Unceasingly and still,
Along the quiet waters
In niches of the hill.

We linger at the vigil
With him who bent the knee
To watch the old-time lilies
In distant Galilee;
And still the worship deepens
And quickens into new,
As brightening down the ages
God's secret thrilleth through

O Toiler of the lily,
Thy touch is in the man!
No leaf that dawns to petal
But waits the angel-plan.
The flower-horizons open!
The blossom vaster shows!
We hear thy wide world's echo—
See how the lily grows!

Thy yearnings of the savage
Unfolding thought by thought,
To holy lives are lifted,
To visions fair are wrought;
The races rise and cluster,
And evils fade and fall,
Till chaos blooms to beauty,
Thy purpose crowning all!
—William C. Gannett.

For PARISH AND HOME.

THE LENTEN SEASON.

"In fastings often" ST PAUL.

ERE the half of February has run its course we shall enter once more upon the solemn season of Lent. Our thoughts are in a minor measure at this season. For forty days of solemn fasting we go with our Lord to the desert. The church year is arranged on the principle of having special seasons for special purposes. One day in every seven is a happy feast day—Sunday. It seems but a few days since our thoughts were centered on the birth of the child Jesus. We have rejoiced with the shepherds of Bethlehem. Soon we shall meet with the women who, with bursting hearts beheld the bitter agony of the Cross. But the grief shall be short lived. The brightness, the

hope of Easter shall follow soon and the deep shadow of the Cross be turned to the joyous sunlight of the Resurrection.

All these seasons are associated with Christ. They commemorate important incidents in His life. We welcome the joyous seasons—our Christmas and our Easter. Yet mingled joy and sorrow were His portion. The more closely we follow Him the less shall we shrink from the shadows that fell upon Him. A deeper shadow has fallen upon us. He mourned for no sin which He had committed. If we rejoice often over what He has done we must sometimes weep over what we have done. We feast often, but we must fast sometimes.

The best test of the Christian life is the measure of realization of the depth of sin. At Christmas time we think of our many blessings, of the peace and good will which Christ has brought. In Lent we are intended to think of our own shortcomings, to peer bravely into the darker corners of our hearts and find what is there. Repentance is the one thought of Lent. The poor human copy is put side by side with the Divine original that a just estimate may be made of the value of each. A Lenten custom in the early church might well be revived. We sometimes mourn that the good will and charity of the Christmas season pass away so soon. In the olden time Lent too was a season for special exercise of charity and mercy. It was a time of comparative rest and liberty for servants. Criminal cases were suspended and no punishments were inflicted in Lent. Easter week was a time of especial liberality. Those who in this season of solemn self-discipline had seen their own sin and folly, were disposed to look kindly upon their sinning fellow men and to help them.

The Church of England calls the forty days of Lent "Days of Fasting or Abstinence." This is the extent of her definition. Each person is left to judge for himself what form his abstinence shall take. The one purpose of the season is to lead men to see their need of a Saviour. The happy few may be living so near Him throughout the whole year that every day is a fast and a feast, full of abstinence and full, too, of joy. Few of us are, however, living so near that we might not live nearer, and the season of Lent is God's call to us to make a special effort to put away