

our religion, but is rather the delimitation of essence by following more closely the inherent law of its own manifestation as the power of God unto salvation to every soul that believeth. The more we look to the central, all dominant verity of the Incarnation for the law which is to govern us in our dealing with man as composed of body and spirit, in our elaboration and use of schemes of instruction and training for the young, in our general conceptions of Christianity, and in our choice of the lines of evidence which shall most cogently sustain, in these strangely unsettled times, its claims to a Divine origin, the more likely will we be able to do surely and safely the tasks we have undertaken as the ordained servants and representatives of Him who is head over all things to His Church. Let us then, one and all, endeavour by God's grace to feel more and more in the great work of Christian nurture the almost audible throbings of the supernatural mysteries of redemption in the outward things of God's appointment—in the very sacraments and institutions which Christ established to certify His healing presence. Let us build up the regenerated life about us by the means and in the ways that He intended, not fearing to make the most we can, as of all other parts of His plan, so especially, in view of the negations and confusions of these days and of the over-wrought, spurious spiritualism around us, of the one Baptism for the remission of sins, of the Laying on of Hands, of the Holy Eucharist and of the sacred Ministry in its threefold Order and its threefold functions. If we do this it is certain that what we build will not rest on individual experiences and emotions, or on any man's private judgment of his soul's needs, or on any man's private interpretation of God's acts in our behalf sacramentally expressed and certified; here are His promises and our vows wrought up into everlasting covenants, signed by His hand and sealed with the atoning blood of His only Son—here are truths and powers and gifts that have their unfailing source in the Incarnation, and from it are derived upon the Church as the perpetuated body of Christ and upon its individual members through the operation of the Holy Ghost. If what we build do rest upon these objective realities, then our belief and the life growing out of it will be exempt, as much as anything can be in this shifting, vanishing world, from the alternate heat and chill, weakness and vacillation of a purely subjective hold on that eternal life which is and ever must be the gift of God through Jesus Christ.

OUR CALLING, OR WORK IN LIFE.

It is a kind providence which for the most part hides our future from us. We often hear people say, if they could only look into the future and see what turn things would take they would know exactly what to do. This sounds very plausible, and not a few are taken by the idea and adopt it. As they cannot see what their future is to be, they dismiss much thought about it and do nothing. Do such persons really think they are wiser than the Creator? That they know better than He does what will be for our highest good? The future is hid from our eyes. But that future is sure to come, and come to us; and if we did but know it, its condition and character will be shaped very much

by ourselves. If we begin early to do honestly and faithfully the work which comes to us day by day, and improve our time and opportunities as well, we need not borrow much trouble about our future. We shall soon see that we are in the process of just the kind of education which will fit us for the work which comes up to our hand. We would say therefore to one and all spend not so much time in speculating as to what your calling or work shall be hereafter, but do now, with might and main, what your hands find to do, and do it so well that there will be no lack of demand for your services, and your calling will take care of itself. Bear in mind that anything the Lord calls us to do, no matter when or where, must be right, and respectable, and honorable. There is a great deal of sinful pride even among Christians on this subject. They want their children to have high places in the world. They do not object so very much to religion and the Church, only let them have good places. A mother of old was willing her two sons, James and John, should be the disciples of Christ, but she wanted they should have places of honor, one on His right hand, the other on His left. She little knew what she was asking. They both became great and widely known. Each obtained a crown, but the crown of martyrdom. Let us rather live day by day in the spirit of the Lord's Prayer, doing our duty humbly and faithfully, and our calling and life's great work will be made plain to us. When that work is finished here we shall go to a higher service above.—*The Parish Visitor, N. Y.*

MARRIAGE.

As with the State, so with the Family, the possibility of its existence depends upon preparedness on the part of all to submit to a Will higher than the will of self; and where there is a recognition of pre-ordained rule, as in the very existence of the State and the family, there must be some provision for the embodiment and execution of rule. There is always risk that the appointed ruler may be tyrannical wherever there is any rule, and the tyrannical ruler is a far worse sinner against the sacredness of obedience and authority than any other rebel, because he brings obedience and reverence for authority into discredit, and puts the best subjects at a disadvantage as compared with the worst.

The Church provides to her utmost against a tyrannical use by the husband of the wife's promise of obedience by requiring the ring on her finger, "With my body I thee worship." In the face of this it is impossible to contend that the Church pre-supposes any unworthy idea of superiority on the man's part. The man no more than the woman is to undertake marriage except with one whom he is prepared thus to honour highly. The ideal marriage, the ideal home, is one in which the husband can worship the wife and the wife can be subject to the husband and to the Lord Jesus Christ at the same time. 'Ye husbands,' says St. Peter, 'in like manner dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honour unto the woman as unto the weaker vessel, as being heirs together (joint-heirs) of the grace of life; to the end that your prayers be not hindered.'

The compendium of all prayers, as the beginning of all prayers, is in the words, 'Our Father, hallowed be Thy Name.' That is the most fundamental of all human aspirations, alike for the individual, man or woman, and for the family, and for the community. And, in the light of the man's wedding words, the prayer, 'Father, hal-

lowed be Thy Name,' conveys the same aspiration for the mother's name. What a prayer for purity the words are, from the earliest moment when their prospective as well as present bearing can be comprehended.

When we think thus of Holy Matrimony, as so much more than the civil authorities can enforce, we cannot but feel that there is something very insufficient to the satisfaction of highest human aspirations in the mere Registrar-office form of marriage. Of course, that form of marriage is perfectly legal, and as indissoluble as marriage by the Church. But surely it is not all that our human, national, Christian aspirations demand that the act of marriage should be. It seems therefore, very sad when two persons, really marrying with high purpose, are contented to do without the full marriage office of The Church as before God and their fellow-members of Christ. And Church-folk should be at some pains to master the reasons for, and to remove all obstacles to, Church celebration of marriage.

Surely those who believe that there is such a thing as God's Blessing and Grace, which can be sought for and received in anything, should seek for that Blessing and Grace in an act of such profound import and far-reaching consequence as the act of marriage. We must be receptive in our state of mind and heart if we would have the blessing and grace which are to be had in hours when indifference must be loss, and aspiration cannot but be fruitful. A sorrowful scepticism as to the existence of a spiritual kingdom, in which we live and move and have our being, can alone justify the severance of Matrimony from the adoring recognition of a Power above either and both of those who desire to live the life of oneness, a Power who is Love Supreme, Abundant, Unfailing, Ever-renewing. The truly human conditions for marriage are, as we have seen, that each should recognise in the other something above himself and herself; something—nay, some one—to be worshipped and to be obeyed. How different this from a mere legal contract between two self-assertive individuals. Surely the only sufficiency for these things is in the humble, reverent, seeking, receptive, adoring yielding of the two selves, to be fused by the mystic power of God in man. Surely, unless their conscience forbid, a man and a woman have no right, just in order to save themselves a little mental exertion, to venture to do without those unseen gracious majestic influences which each needs in order to be what each may be to the other, what both may be, and are bound to seek to be, towards the community upon which their union will exercise untold influence for good or bad.

And in proportion as we in our Church-life think thus seriously and reverently of Holy Matrimony we ought to do our utmost that its celebration may have befitting dignity and honour. When we assist at the marriage of our friends—we ought to feel that we are at Divine Service (a Service, remember, which, according to the rubric of the Church, should have the Holy Communion embodied in it). We should seek to behave, not as sightseers, but as fellow-worshippers and interceders at Holy Communion, trying to surround every marriage with every little token of our belief in the sacred mystic character, feeling that the more we can do this the more we shall educate our Church, and neighborhood, and human life in lofty conceptions of the sacredness of humanity and the power of mutual reverence.

It would in many cases be most profitable if rural dean chapters and conferences would discuss the local customs, and charges, and prejudices which are in any way obstacles to the maintenance and fulfilment of the instinctive idea that marriage should be celebrated at the spot, and amid the surroundings, which testify supremely to the sacredness of human birth and life, and to the fact that these are not merely our own individualistic possessions, but are bought with a price by Christ for our neighborhood, and fatherland in God.—*G. S. in Church Bells.*