

not, the clergyman should return after the sermon to the chancel, and read at least one Offertory Sentence, and the prayer, for the Church Militant (for so the first rubric at the close of the Communion Office enjoins), the change of dress from white to black, and then again from black to white, causes an unseemly break in the service—nay, goes far to make it appear as if there were two services when there is only one; and almost suggests to persons that they ought to leave the church when the sermon is over, instead of keeping up such a semblance of unity throughout, as would make a departure before the celebration appear, what it is an unseemly thing. The use of the gown does more in this way than people imagine, to lessen the number of our communicants; and therefore I am sure your Vicar has done a wise thing, in making the surplice at once and at all times his settled clerical garb.

You speak of it as a thing immaterial. From your point of view it is so, and therefore can be borne with more easily. As I look upon it, I consider it a matter of some importance; and therefore, as I am sure your Vicar feels about it in the same way, it is more natural that you should yield to him that which, except as far as it may be thought a badge of party, has no particular meaning for you; than that he should yield to you in that which he looks upon as affecting his people in a matter so important as their more frequent attendance at the table of the Lord.

As to the time for the introduction of such a change, I think he shows his wisdom in doing it at once. Twelve months hence it would create as great a commotion as it could cause now—with this disadvantage to him, that you might naturally ask, "Why do it now, if it were not obligatory before?" and with this disadvantage also to you, that you would be one year longer without that wholesome warning, which the unbroken character of the Service, just alluded to, might have given.

Now the thing is done. It will be a matter of wonder and questioning for a few weeks—then it will all pass away. Men will see that it foreshadowed no danger, and that the garb in which it is preached cannot affect the purity of the Gospel, or the soundness of the preacher.

In my chapel of ease, where a gown was never seen (for having built it myself, I at once arranged all its services as I felt right, and in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer), the surplice never seems out of place, and I verily believe the congregation would now object as much to the innovation of a gown, as the parish church flock would object to the introduction of a surplice.

It is all a matter of habit and prejudice; and, believe me, we, who know all this, and what is best for our people, do them a service when we run the risk of losing our popularity for a season, to defend them against themselves. I am the last person in the world to thrust down men's throats my own opinions, or violently change the religious custom and usage of their lives. I must get them by persuasion, and under conviction, to change in such matters for themselves, or else I do no good. What am I? The moral teacher of their minds—not the drill-sergeant of their bodies, to rough-ride them into conformity with my will. And I value no change effected in the form of worship of my flock, unless it be one to which their own hearts, under God's teaching, lead them.

But there are certain things in our own hands, and with which they have no right to interfere, inasmuch as their own conduct and customs need not be altered thereby. Such, for example, as this matter of dress, and the manner and frequency of celebrating the Lord's Supper, and daily prayer, and festival services, and the introduction of the baptismal service into that of the day, and the use of the prayer for the Church Militant, and, indeed, I might also add the introduction of the Offertory. For though there may be two objections raised against these latter usages, which indeed I believe are the real objections, no matter what affectation of love for old custom may be worn on the surface, namely, that thus a demand is made upon their time, which they grudge greatly, and on their pockets, which they grudge still more; yet (except in the matter of the baptismal service, which is, I grant, a considerable addition to a service already too long), the time-injury is so trifling (not five minutes more when the Offertory

is not collected), and the pocket-plea is so easily and commonly resisted, by keeping it buttoned, and not seeming to see the alms-dish, though held ever so near,—that no one need be either devout, or charitable, at this portion of the service, if he has any conscientious objections; he has these duties simply suggested to him, but is not compelled to yield to the suggestion; while the clergyman has his vows to conform to the rubric, and his conscience to bind him to such conformity—though they too often are both esteemed of small moment, when set against the prejudices and wish of his people.

The true way in which each should act, is that of mutual forbearance. Let us give each other equal credit for a desire to do what is right, and show by our tempers and lives that we seek, not the triumph of our own opinions and ways, but of truth and Christ. Then all will go well.

(To be continued.)

Children's Department.

BOTH SIDES.

A man in his carriage was riding along,
A gaily dressed wife by his side;
In satin and laces she looked like the queen,
And he like a king in his pride.

A wood sawyer stood on the street as they passed;
The carriage and couple he eyed;
And said, as he worked with his saw on a log,
"I wish I was rich and could ride."

The man in his carriage remarked to his wife,
"One thing I would give if I could—
I'd give my wealth for the strength and the health
Of the man who sawed the wood."

A pretty young maid, with a bundle of work,
Whose face, as the morning, was fair,
Went tripping along with a smile of delight,
While humming a love-breathing air.

She looked on the carriage; the lady she saw,
Arrayed in apparel so fine,
And sad in a whisper, "I wish from my heart
Those satins and laces were mine."

The lady looked out on the maid with her work,
So fair in her calico dress,
And said, "I'd relinquish position and wealth,
Her beauty and youth to possess."

Thus it is in the world, whatever our lot,
Our minds and our time we employ
In longing and sighing for what we have not,
Ungrateful for what we enjoy.

KEEPING LENT.

Every child who is old enough to know the difference between right and wrong, to know that he has sinned, and that our blessed Lord came down to earth and suffered a cruel death to save him from his sins, is old enough to keep Lent. So when the Church bids us spend forty days in fasting and prayer, the little ones, as well as their elders, should hasten like dutiful children to obey her call. They should think what they ought to do, and not excuse themselves from doing anything because they are so young.

There are three duties to which we are especially called during Lent, and these are fasting, prayer and almsgiving. And first

FASTING.

You all need plenty of wholesome food to strengthen your bodies, and help them to grow to the stature which God means them to attain, and it would be wrong for you not to take it. But there are other ways in which you may perform this duty besides going without necessary food. The pies and cakes and sweetmeats, which are the crowning part of your daily meals, are not necessary to your health and growth, and these you may deny yourselves during Lent. The candies and fruits and nuts, that steal the pennies from your pocket at recess time, may very well be given up for forty days.

To fast is to abstain, to keep from; so while

the greedy child may fast from tempting dishes, the quick-tempered child may fast from angry words and deeds; the child who is fond of gossip, from idle and uncharitable stories; the sullen child, from pouts and frowns and tears. The vain child may fast from glances at the mirror, or from bright ribbons and jewelry, if the becoming colour or glittering bracelet fill the mind with proud and foolish thoughts. There is no harm in pretty adornings, if the love of them does not tarnish "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." The selfish child may fast from pleasing self; and of whatever sin a child knows himself to be especially guilty, from that sin he not only may but *must* fast if he wishes to spend this Lent as the Church bids him.

It is well, early, to decide upon some one pleasure which you will deny yourself during the entire season. Let it be something which it will be a trial to give up, not some trifle for which you do not care, and once having made the resolution, keep it, however hard the keeping may be.

PRAYER.

No good thing can be done without prayer, for we need God's help to do anything aright, and that He gives in answer to prayer. So as you need His help more than ever in Lent, you must pray for it oftener and more earnestly than ever. You must never neglect your morning and evening prayers, and to them you may add the Lord's Prayer and a Collect at noon, when perhaps you have not before thought of praying. The few petitions to God in the middle of the day will bring your minds and hearts back to Him, from Whom they may have wandered in the bustle of school and other duties, and keep them with Him through the rest of the day.

There will be more frequent Services in church, some of which you should try if possible to attend. There must be one at least during the week, from which neither school hours nor bed time need keep you, and that one, the child who seeks to keep Lent rightly, will never willingly neglect. And strive to have your prayers more real, to conquer your wandering thoughts, to be earnest, devout and sincere. The prayer offered with the heart as well as the lips is the only one that God will hear.

ALMSGIVING

is the third duty which you have to perform, and this connects itself with the other two. Those who love God and pray to Him, love their neighbours also; those who deny themselves for God, will deny themselves also for the poor who are His children. So during Lent, if you are keeping it with fasting and prayer, you will be also saving the pennies which self-denials gain for you, to offer them at Easter to the Lord. You will be looking after the interests of your Mite Chests and Missionary Boxes, and of the various charities which so many of you are helping. And whether or not you have many pennies to bring to God, you will not forget the other kind of offering which you will have it in your power to make. You will not forget that your Heavenly Father hears and answers prayer, and you will pray to Him to help and relieve His sick and poor and sorrowing children, whom you would so gladly help if you could. You will not forget that bright smiles and pleasant words and kindly deeds are often the most welcome of gifts, and so will not fail to let them abound at home, at school, and everywhere you go.

Remember that God loves a cheerful giver, and let all your sacrifices be made, and all your gifts given, freely and with a glad heart.

And now, dear children, think of these things. You look forward with hope to a bright and joyful Easter—gain it by a well-spent Lent.

Poets know, and statesmen ought to know, it is by sentiment when well directed—as by sorrow when well used—great nations live. When sentiment dies out, and mere prosaic calculation of loss and profit takes its place, then comes a Byzantine epoch, a Chinese epoch, decrepitude, and slow decay.

"He careth for you." A wise care—a tender care—an efficient care—that bringeth all His safe to glory.

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