

which every man's own conscience must decide for him. The Church lays down no rules except as to the minimum limit, which every one knows is three times a year, of which Easter to be one."

"BASKETS."

(From *Home Reunion Notes*, by Earl Nelson.)

We do not half realise what we lose for want of 'baskets,' or for want of using those we do possess; neither do we thoroughly realise, to use Archdeacon Wilson's simile, how many fish we may lose from not using them. Souls, like fish, are slippery things, and may often, if left to themselves, slip away altogether from the Master's storehouse. Few without the baskets would be gathered in. The one peculiarity of Christianity, above all other religions, is its law of universal love for man, we are all one in Christ Jesus—black and white, rich and poor, master and slave, all one in Christ; and how wonderful must be the outcome of such teaching faithfully given in word and in deed.

Hence would come the end of all caste or class distinctions.

Hence would come the end of all our petty squabbles, backbiting and jealousies.

Hence would come the end of war, and the beginning of that time of universal peace, so beautifully described by Isaiah, and by Virgil in his 'Eclogues,' a foreshadowing of the blessings of Messiah's reign.

Although the Crusades were blighted by the use of earthly weapons for spiritual ends, surely, when all western Christendom rose as one man to rescue our Lord's sepulchre from the hand of the infidel, we were nearer the universal brotherhood than we are now. However blessed the work of the Reformation in removing medieval errors and Papal aggressions, we lost, or at least cast aside many 'baskets' which had been useful in gathering souls and keeping them when gathered.

There were many shortcomings in those old times—religious wars, lust after worldly power, bitter persecutions and the like—which hindered the work. But there was the one Church to which all outwardly belonged, notwithstanding their different nationalities or modes of speech, and, when this basket was broken, a narrow-mindedness came in which for the law of love set up a law of hate even among those who called themselves Christians; nation was set against nation, sect against sect; and war, and persecution, and division became more rampant than they had ever been under the old regime.

But allow me to particularise some of the smaller baskets and the loss sustained by their disuse. *Sacramental grace*—the use of the outward visible sign of the promised grace. Of course, there is the danger of worshipping the sign, and of ignoring the promise of the Holy Spirit's universal outpouring. But how many souls have slipped away altogether for want of these baskets? *Despairing souls* who have been unable to win for themselves an assurance of forgiveness; *self-righteous souls* who have lived wrapped up in self from the loss of sacramental union with the other members of Christ's body; *careless souls* who, from neglect of the appointed means, have lived as if they knew not that there was any Holy Spirit promised to help those who seek Him, and who have passed their lives in a happy-go-lucky way, waiting for some mysterious outpouring, which, if it ever comes, is too often mistaken for a passing excitement bringing no abiding fruit.

Then there is the daily service, a source of unity between priest and people; the daily reading of the Bible, by appointed lessons; the teachings of the Christian year; all most useful baskets for keeping souls and helping them on in the way

of holiness. How many Christians have cast these baskets away altogether, and lost thereby all hold of Christian brotherhood, all true balanced knowledge of the teaching of the Bible; all help to keep them through their daily life of business and of care unspotted from the world. Sermons once a week, family prayers and daily reading of the Bible at home are all very good in their way, but are no real substitute for the baskets to which I have alluded.

A sermon once a week is too often admired as an oratorical display or a subject for critical discussion. Family prayer is no substitute for public worship, and the reading of the Bible, except in a duly appointed course, is apt to degenerate into an exercise of private judgment, whereby we extol ourselves and judge harshly of those who differ from us.

It is good to root out evil and corruption, but there is always a danger of gathering up the good seed also, and we may be quite sure that we have injured the onward march of true Christian principles when, in our zeal for greater freedom, we cast aside baskets which have of old time been appointed as means for catching fish, and then of bringing them safe in the Master's storehouse.

HYMNS OF THE CHURCH.

We took occasion recently to say a few words in reference to the trashy, mischievous style of the Moody and Sankey hymns and such like with which our country is flooded. A late number of *The Spokane Churchman* has as an article expressing very much the same opinions from which we take the following:

The choice of hymns, and the manner in which they are sung in public worship, may either make or mar a religious service. Inappropriate hymns, badly sung, may spoil the best preaching and throw a damp and chill upon the devotional exercises of the house of God. On the other hand, hymns that harmonize with the season, service, the sermon, or that sum up the practical lessons of a discourse, will make all the difference between a time of weariness and languor and a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. In like manner the general tone of religious people will partake of the character of the hymns which they are accustomed to sing. Many hymns which are called Gospel hymns might be called Gutter Hymns, so far as the character of their poetry is concerned. Hymns which destroy reverence will, in the end, destroy piety. True poetry is the handmaid of true piety, and the one cannot be injured without the other suffering. If we were to ask some modern congregation to "Sing us one of the Songs of Zion," we should have a response all too ready in some doggerel stuff about "Holding the Fort," "In the sweet Bye and Bye," or such trash as, "The Devil is mad, and I am glad." The Moodiness and Sankey-moniousness (if we may coin a praise) of the ranting, rambling rhymes of a certain class of hymns has done more harm than good to the cause of true religion. The false imagery, the sickly sentiment, the halting metre, the jabbering rhyme, which enters into the composition of much that pass for hymns now-a-days would not be tolerated in a common pot house song book. The old Methodist preacher who used to stand outside the gin shops to learn the tunes which were sung by convivial fellows who resorted thither, that he might adapt them for hymn singing, and who excused himself on the ground that he did not see why the devil should have all the good tunes, would doubtless reject the tunes and the words of much found in some so-called church hymnals, and sung by some congregations. Let it be remembered that the early Methodists had alike the gift of song and

true poetry. We might close right here, but cannot refrain from showing how many of the grand old hymns and tunes seem to be passing away. Even the Old Hundredth seems likely soon to be relegated to the ancient lore of forgotten hymnology. We asked a congregation some time ago to sing it, and to our astonishment the organist replied, "The Old Hundred? Why, I never heard of that." We may have something to say in future articles on the subject of 'Our New Hymnal.'—*Church Helper, Michigan.*

WHAT MR. GLADSTONE HAS DONE.

"In 1845, Mr. Gladstone supported the grant to the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth."

"In 1854, he opposed inquiry into conventual and monastic institutions."

"In 1858, when acting as High Commissioner of Her Majesty to the Ionian Islands, he assisted at Mass, drank of lustral water, kissed the hands of priests, etc., so that 'all Corfu was astonished.'"

"In 1865, he supported the movement to establish a Roman Catholic University in Ireland."

"In 1867, he supported a Bill which literally gave the Pope co-ordinate power in England with the Sovereign of this country (see the *Times* of March 21st, 1867.)"

"In 1869, he described the Protestant community in Ireland as 'a tall tree of noxious growth, darkening and poisoning the land.'"

"In 1869, he disestablished the Irish Church, and handed over to the Church of Rome no less a sum than £364,000 obtained by this act."

"In 1870, as appeared by a letter published in the *Standard* of February 8th, 1871, the Pope thanked Mr. Gladstone 'for the eminent services rendered by you to us, and to that holy religion the interest of which it is our chief duty to advance.'"

"In 1871, Mr. Gladstone released the Popish murderers of Mr. Murphy, the Protestant lecturer at Whitehaven, after a short term of imprisonment. Upon this the *Morning Advertiser* commented as follows: "Either owing to the political necessities of Mr. Gladstone, or some deeper and more mysterious cause, we are now living in this Protestant country under Romish intimidation."

"In 1850, Mr. Gladstone appointed a Roman Catholic Viceroy of India, a proceeding which shocked and angered many of his most devoted followers."

And (omitting many other instances)—

"In 1891, he supported the Religious Disabilities Removal Bill, to permit Roman Catholics to hold the offices of Lord Chancellor of England and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland."

No wonder that when, in 1870, Mr. Gladstone was asked point blank whether he belonged to the Church of Rome, he carefully abstained from anything like a direct answer.—*Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette.*

An afternoon service in one of our magnificent Cathedrals, where player and chorister interpret some sublime Christian preachment of a great musician, and where the singers' names are not known to the majority of the congregation, has infinitely greater effect in stamping Christian impressions on worldly hearts than bushels of the "solos" by Mr. So and So, which are as to music elementary, bald, and thin (being generally hymns, and those by no means of the noble but of the confectionery sort), and as to interpretation strained and self-conscious to a degree. In short, sensational religionism not only has no lasting value at all, but is frequently fraught with dangerous consequences, and should always be sternly deprecated by all who have the cause of Christianity at heart.—*Church Review.*