

of God amongst men. Schools and colleges, all the social and intellectual forces of the time, do but beat the air so far as eternal good is concerned, except they help in some degree to make plain to the general understanding the truth the Most High God ruleth in the affairs of men, and that He, the God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is, by His eternal Son, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. When the Church told us of the one True and Only God, and taught us to pray to Him through the merits and in the Name of His Incarnate Son, she taught us her very noblest lesson. And when she assured us from the Holy Word, of which she is the divinely appointed witness, and keeper, and expounder, that the living Father of all is ever ready, with sympathetic ear, to hear our petitions, and to answer them for His Son's sake, she taught us a large part of the true philosophy of things, and clearly pointed the way from earth to heaven. Prayer, much prayer, private, incessant prayer, is the secret of progress in the religious life. Except prayer hold the first place, there will be scant going forward. The business of the daily round must be anticipated by prayer, purified by prayer, saturated with prayer. Prayer is the swift-winged messenger that brings down to us God's choicest blessings,—nay more, that brings down to us God Himself. In truth, it is part of the eternal world plan, a condition precedent to human existence that men should pray, so that, in response to their humble and trusting supplications, the Spirit of God should come and dwell with them. As St. Augustine beautifully expresses it* :—*Tu excitas ut laudare te delectet ; quia fecisti nos ad te, et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te.*

II. The Church is the age long witness to the reality of the Incarnation, and by her instrumentality the blessings of the Incarnation are brought home to men. As when our Lord tabernacled in the flesh, there were those who said : " Lord, teach us to pray," so on all sides at this very day, His Church is besought in like manner. Weary hearts are longing to pray, they want to be taught to pray, they seek opportunities for prayer—opportunities which lie within the power of the Church to afford. For our present purposes, I mean by " The Church " the Church of England in Canada.

The statement is made, and we believe it to be true, that 90 per cent. of our parish churches are closed, and bolted, and locked, from Monday morning to Saturday night,—closed, and bolted, and locked the live-long day lest, happily, any poor souls should enter the courts of the Lord's house to rest a while, and think, and pray. With us no sound of another greets the dawn or breaks the stillness of the morning hours. From more than

*Confessiones, Bk. I., chap. i.