

The Church Evangelist.

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"Pessimism."

In a recent issue of this journal a respected correspondent took us severely to task for the Pessimism of the article on the missions of the Church. Pessimism is no doubt a very bad thing in any one, and a very sinful thing in a Christian. We hardly think, however, that the article in question was open to the charge of unqualified Pessimism, as our friend assumed. The word Pessimist has only come into general use in recent years. It is derived from the Latin word *pesimus*, the superlative of *malus*, bad, and is rightly translated "*worst*." It first came into use, if we mistake not, as the description of those despairing philosophers, who letting go their faith in the truths of the Gospel, saw nothing for themselves and others but decay and death, and who took the gloomiest view of the future of the world's history. And so a Pessimist is properly one who sees nothing but calamity and disaster in the future of the Church and of the world. No doubt everyone who goes on murmuring and complaining, and uttering the language of despair, is in his way a Pessimist.

It is not Pessimism, however, to point out defects and failings and needs, with the belief and hope implied or expressed, that they can be remedied or supplied. The Christian prophet, for instance, who sees the wrongs and iniquities of society, exposes them, in order that they may be remedied, denounces them in the name of Christ, conceals none of them, excuses none, apologizes for none, endorses none for the sake of popularity, or office, or emolument—this is the attitude not of the Pessimist, but of the real optimist. That citizen of Toronto, for instance, who to-day lays bare the real extent and peril of the calamity that has befallen the city in the collapse of its water supply, and the need of instant remedy, is not a Pessimist; even as he is no true optimist who would conceal the extent of the evil, and set himself to persuade people that the water supplied is pure and wholesome. Even so we were surely no Pessimists in calling attention to the chronic condition of the various Mission Funds, and then appealing to all Churchmen to set themselves to devise some remedy, for a remedy must and can be found for this state of things. If this is Pessimism it is optimistic Pessimism, a Pessimism which sees and calls attention to those defects and needs and faults which attach to all human affairs, but which calls attention to them with the persuasion that they can be—and with the determination that, God willing, they shall be remedied and supplied.

This is the very position which we intend to vindicate as our own, in the conduct of this journal. We are Pessimistic Optimists. We will conceal no defects, spare no neglects, be silenced by no respects, where reform is possible.

Pessimism distrusts and dishonors God.

Pessimism is practical unbelief.

We are no Pessimists.

"*Laissez faire* is Pessimism. Indiscriminate, stolid conservatism is Pessimism. We all know the posture, the calling, the cry of the Hebrew prophets. Were they Pessimists? Was John Baptist a Pessimist?"

"The Church is nothing if it is not a witness for Him who put Himself at the head of all reformers by confronting the self-satisfied, and by convincing the world that it must be set right because it is so wrong.

Better the truth-teller, who uncovers what is bad to turn it into good, than the flatterer, who calls evil good and lets it go from bad to worse.

Pray for Your Bishop.

"A Bishop needs prayers." So writes the Bishop of Western Michigan. And if in the American, not less in the Canadian Church.

In putting forth a prayer for use in his Diocese, Bishop Gillespie shows cause for prayer on his behalf in terms with which all our Bishops would thoroughly agree.

A Bishop needs Prayers. His Diocese should be to him in this regard what a parish is to its rector. He has many important decisions to make, and his mistakes involve the interests of the Diocese. He is necessarily often brought in delicate and painful relations to the clergy and the people, and he has not that intercourse with them that will heal any feelings that may be aroused. He is in lonely journeyings, in uncongenial situations. He has perplexities, disappointments, heavy burdens of responsibility to bear. Brethren pray for us.

A PRAYER FOR THE BISHOP.

"Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, who hast purchased to Thyself, an universal Church, by the precious blood of Thy dear Son, mercifully look upon the same; and especially so guide and govern Thy servant, the Bishop of this Diocese, and adorn him with innocency of life, that he may faithfully serve Thee in his Office, to the glory of Thy Name, and the edifying and well-governing of Thy Church, through the merits of the same, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.—AMEN.

Intercession in Behalf of Sunday School Work.

Under the sanction of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Church of England Sunday School Institute in England has suggested that Sunday and Monday, October 20th and 21st, should be observed as days of Intercession in behalf of our Sunday schools and Sunday school work. The Inter-diocesan Sunday school Committee, in their report adopted at the late meeting of the Provincial Synod, suggested a similar observance of these days by the Church in Canada. The Archbishop of Ontario has accepted the suggestion, and has expressed a hope that there may be an observance of these days in all Dioceses, so that the Church in Canada may unite with the Church of England throughout the world in seeking God's blessing upon this important branch of our common work.

Our bishops therefore suggest to the clergy to bring this subject before their congregations on Sunday, the 20th instant, and also to add some suitable collects or prayers either in the course of service or at the close of the sermon and before the blessing.

It will not do, however, to leave the matter until the day itself. It will be necessary for the clergy and Sunday school superintendents to make thorough preparation next Sunday to secure a proper observance of the days of Intercession.

It would also be very suitable to bring the matter before the children themselves in Sunday school and to offer special Intercession. And in some places it may be feasible on Monday, the 31st instant, to hold some special social gathering of the children and their parents, dwelling for a portion of the time with prayer and singing upon the blessings, which are assured to those who are brought up in God's faith and fear. The following prayers are suitable, and have Episcopal sanction for use in Church:

Second Collect of Good Friday, Collects of 25th Sunday after Trinity, and of St. Simons and St. Jude, and any of the following:

Most merciful Father, we beseech Thee to send upon Thy servants, who teach our children, Thy heavenly blessing; that they may be clothed with righteousness, and that Thy Word, spoken by their mouths, may have such good success, that it may never be spoken in vain. Grant also that our children