

The *Church Record* says:—

At this season the thoughts, feelings, resolutions, and duties suggested by Advent ought to be matters of interest to all Christian people, challenging and arresting attention when we go out and when we come in, at home, or at work, or in Church.

"Jesus Christ our Lord was once here in the flesh: He is still here in the spirit: He will come again in glory to judge both the quick and the dead."

This is the striking, arresting voice of the Church at Advent, reiterating old truths, which are ever able to influence you in ever new combinations; truths which must be repeated again and again, until you have taken them home to your heart as the great facts which are to give tone to your life, and to discipline your every thought, word, and action.

It is because there is yet room for these truths to take deeper root in your heart that the Church has her Advent season. "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand;" "Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him."

The Church, the Bride of Christ, is important with this summons, because it is only too evident that many of her children are so wrapt up in the "cares of this world," as to be in danger of forgetting the far more important reality of Christ's presence.

True, the "cares of this world" are very real,—the price of bread, and coal, and shoes, and clothing, the daily work that must be done to win the daily bread, the duties of home, society and business.

But where is your faith? Who taught St. Peter to say, "casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you?" Who pronounced the law, "Be not anxious for the morrow," a law as binding as "Thou shalt not steal?" Or who said, "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things?" On whose word does the promise rest, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you?" Who taught you to pray, "Our Father, give us this day our daily bread?" Take Him at His word; trust Him; claim your rights. When He comes, let Him at least "find faith" among His own.

By all means work, and work hard. God who commanded you to rest and keep holy one day in seven, commanded also, "six days shalt thou labor;" but do your work as a member of Christ, the child of God, and the inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, "as to the Lord and not unto man."

Try to make a new beginning with this new Christian year. Use all the means of grace which your Church provides. Do not dare to pick and choose, and so say, "I will take this one of God's gifts, and not that;" take them all, and wrestle for a blessing therein.

But this is not enough. Seek Jesus also in the world as well as in the Church. Go out day by day clad in the "whole armour of God." Do not think only of so much work to be done, so much money to be made; but also, as you work, remember that you have a soul to save, a work in the kingdom of heaven to do.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[The name of Correspondent must in all cases be enclosed with letter, but will not be published unless desired. The Editor will not hold himself responsible, however, for any opinions expressed by Correspondents].

PROVINCIAL SYNOD OF RUPERT'S LAND

To the Editor of the *Church Guardian*:

SIR,—I see in your report of the proceedings at the Provincial Synod of Rupert's Land, published in your last issue, the following statement: "considerable amusement, coupled with a feeling of shame, was evoked when the Treas-

urer stated that only \$11.55 had been received from Eastern Canada for the past 12 months."

By the annual report of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society it appears by the Treasurer's statement that the sum of \$15,141.86 had been collected in Eastern Canada from 13th Sept., 1887, to 31st July, 1888, for Domestic Missions, that is Algoma and the Northwest. The report, however, does not specify how the same was appropriated. As a member of the Board of Missions I am certain that a far larger sum than \$11.55 was appropriated to the Northwest. Although I am unable to specify the exact amount, can you explain this discrepancy in the accounts? Yours truly,

E. J. HEMMING.

CONTEMPORARY CHURCH OPINION.

Church Bells, of London, England, says:—

During the approaching Advent season there are advertised to take place at some of our churches special musical services, at which will be performed, more or less elaborately, some well-known works of the great masters. This kind of service, or sacred performance, seems to have become by this time well established amongst us; and there is, as we have before now had occasion to point out, a very great deal to be said for it with complete frankness. Yet, from the Christian point of view at all events, art and religion are not synonymous; the performance of a beautiful piece of music in a Christian church, frankly, in the first instance, for its own sake, may be quite legitimate: yet it is not for such performances that churches exist, and any methods of thought, or teaching, or advertisement, which tend towards confusing the proper relation between art and religion, which tend towards obliterating in men's mind the first and paramount purpose for which a church exists, and human beings are bidden come there, are at any rate non-Christian methods. We were astonished, therefore, to see an advertisement the other day in the paper of the Sunday services at a fashionable West-end Church. There was no mention of morning or evening prayers, or of the Holy Communion. All that was stated was this; that in the morning such and such a famous anthem would be given, and the solo in it sung by a well-known professional artist; in the afternoon that another well-known artist would perform, and in the evening yet another. There was no essential difference, that is to say, between the Sunday advertisement at this Church and the advertisement of the performance at any concert-hall. Now it is one thing to make your religious services beautiful and attractive; it is another to do so by eliminating from them, or appearing to eliminate from them, altogether their essentially religious purpose.

The *Church Review* says:—

"The breaking down of our Bishops one after another is a very serious matter. We have at the present moment, especially among the Bishops appointed during the last ten or twelve years, the cream of the English clergy on the Episcopal bench. But of what avail will that be if we kill them off with hard work? It has been pointed out that the Bishops of Durham, Southwell, Winchester, Truro, Rochester, St. Albans, and St. Asaph are all more or less *hors de combat*, while the Bishop of Oxford has been obliged to resign. The state of the Bishop of Durham—the greatest theological student in England and probably in Europe—is quite serious, and he contemplates the possibility of being unable to continue in harness. Two Bishops in the above list are incapacitated by old age as well as sickness.

The *Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette*, adds:

The present breakdown in health of so many Bishops and clergymen, especially of the

English Church, is something almost phenomenal. We do not remember a time when so many were *hors de combat*, and we cannot but think that the almost universal prevalence of total abstinence from the use of alcohol in some shape or other as a needed stimulant has something to do with it. As far as we can make it out, whether for the sake of example or from personal conviction, a large number of these delicate clergymen have been total abstainers. Their present weakly condition, which renders it necessary for them to retire for a time from active duty, raises the question whether their total abstinence may not have something to say to their sickness? "Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities," is an apostolic precept not lightly to be set aside. It was given not to the old, but to the young. Whatever be the cause, the breakdown in health of so many earnest ecclesiastics at the present time is, as we have said, a phenomenal, as it is likewise a most regrettable, circumstance.

The *Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette* says:—

Rubrics, when faithfully followed by clergy and laity, tend to solemnise Divine Service, which is sometimes described as "partaking of religious exercises." True Churchmen rejoice in having all things connected with God's house of prayer "done with decency and order." And yet, without a direct violation of rubrics, there may be frequently witnessed in church things which offend, to which we should direct our attention. Want of punctuality, clergy rushing from the vestry-room to the reading-desk, books unmarked, thus turning over pages; and perhaps mistakes made in reading wrong psalms and lessons; notices given hurriedly and incorrectly; the solemnity of the offertory omitted by Clergy and churchwardens not "reverently bringing them to the priest, who shall humbly present and place them on the Holy Table. Such defects, to many worshippers, distract their minds." "Our country parson (says G. Herbert) when he is to read divine service, composeth himself to all possible reverence, lifting up his heart and hands and eyes, and using all other gestures which may express a hearty and unfeigned devotion."

The *Southern Churchman*, Richmond V.A., under the title "Incestuous Marriages" says:—

The daily papers of last week tell of the marriage of a man in Delavan, Wis., to his mother-in-law; and instead of utter shame at such abominable incest, they joke about it, and want to know his former and present relationship to the woman.

St. Paul, with wisdom given unto him by the Holy Ghost, has something to say about a similar proceeding in his day at Corinth: "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife." Such an abominable crime, not so much as named among heathen, St. Paul says, was in the Christian Church! In intensest indignation he exclaims: Meet together, ye Corinthian Christians to "deliver this man to Satan."

A free country we have; free to do this, free to do that; free to marry uncle or aunt, mother-in-law, son-in-law or daughter-in-law? Free to obey God or free to disobey and despise His laws, whether written in nature or in the Book. But as sure as God lives there will be a terrible reckoning with people of this country for their disregard of marriage and their regard for divorce and incestuous connections.

Divorce may be necessary; but after divorce marriage is not necessary, or so-called marriage. Wisconsin laws or Virginia laws may permit marriages of any kind; but God's law does not, and woe to the man or woman who violates God's laws in this matter.