

GIVING AND TAKING OF FENCE.

Everybody admits the sinfulness of giving offence, because he can do that while thinking of his neighbor; but comparatively few reflect upon the impropriety of taking offence, because to do that would involve self-condemnation. Yet they are kindred faults, and commonly also neighbors. He who is slow to put a wrong construction on the words or actions of another, will generally be tender in his dealings with his fellow men. But the man who rides rough shod over the feelings of others will be the first to make an outcry if one wounds his sensibilities. The root of both evils is self-conceit. In giving offence the man is enamored in his own way, and so determined to have it that he is unconsciously, it may be, yet oblivious of the rights of others to have opinions of their own, and to set them forth with as much earnestness as they can command. It may be true that his way is the best way; but if they are members of the association equally with him, they have a right to be consulted, and they need to be persuaded. Now, dogmatism is not persuasion, and dictation is not one of the most approved methods of convincing; and so when a man expects that the mere putting through of his scheme is all that is to be cared for, he cannot fail to give offence all round. He has forgotten what was due to others in the exaggerated estimate which he has formed of the value of his own protest.—*Christian at Work.*

"A REASON FOR THE HOPE THAT IS IN YOU."

The Bishop of Chester, preaching in Holy Trinity, Ramcorn, from the text, 'Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear,' said if they asked Roman Catholics or some of the members of the Nonconformist bodies, why they were Roman Catholics, or belonged to this or that Nonconformist body, they were able to give reasons. The members of the Church of England were frequently unable to bring forth any reasons, good, bad or indifferent, and he thought this inability in so far as it existed was partly to the credit of the Church of England. He meant that there was a desire to avoid controversy. So far well and good, but they would agree with him that it was not good if it meant that they did not take pains in teaching distinctive doctrines, touching the reasons why they belonged to the Church of England. He was a Churchman not because he believed the Church to be perfect, nor because he ignored or underrated the good work done by Nonconformist bodies or the Church of Rome, nor because it was the Established Church of the State. He was a member of the Church of England because he was born such; because the Church of England was the historical national Church of the nation; because he believed her doctrines

were conformable to the word of God and to the teachings of the early and undivided Church; because it was blessed by the power of God; because the Church had the remarkable feature of great assimilative power—the power of assimilating truth and learning lessons from all sides and applying them, and so becoming stronger and purer and more attractive in her work; because he saw in her, as perhaps nowhere else, a longing for the unity of the Church; and because he believed that she had a work to do in the world for Christ in relation to other members of the bodies of the Church of Christ which no other Church could do.—*Southern Churchman.*

SENSATIONAL PREACHING.

"There is no place in the world where a politician is so dangerous as in the pulpit. A pastor has immortal souls intrusted to his care. Sunday after Sunday he stands in the pulpit telling the truths of the Bible. Happily the pastor to be faithful, needs no artificial proofs. The old story that for two thousand years has been told, and will continue to be told, is always wanted."

After considering the Church as a refuge from the cares and excitements of the world, he took as the main argument a parish which has been ecclesiastically paralyzed, that was in a comatose condition. Instead of relying on the efficacy of prayer as a relief from trouble, financial and otherwise, the trustees would gather together and summon to the pulpit a 'sensational preacher,' a star. What was the result? For a time it is true the church moved onward and upward and all seemed well. But the inevitable trouble came. It was God alone who gives the increase, and finally the dissension in the church resulted in a relapse. The artificial religion of the sensational preacher had found its true level, and the church was again stagnant.

"It has been shown," said Dr. Corbett, "by statistics in both Europe and America that the parish with the simplest ritual was the most successful." In explaining the tendency toward sensationalism he said we live in an artificial spectacular age. "If a parish," he said in conclusion, "does not prosper it is because the members do not realize their own individual strength.—*Church Helper.*

THE Christian who would pass through this world with a cheerful and happy spirit must make up his mind to a patient endurance of trials. Some of these trials, and the greatest of them, will come from brethren in the Lord.

Harsh criticisms, hasty and uncharitable judgments, the imputation of unworthy motives, efforts to overreach, these from brethren sometimes tempt the best of men to say, 'I am weary of my life.' But the Master whom we love and serve, the Captain whom we follow, has trod this same thorny path. The prevailing remedy for all the depression and discouragement of the child of God is, 'Consider him.'



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