

stance where a warden successively resisted the attempt of a zealous clergyman to introduce week-day service, on the ground that in the Bible we are told to worship God on the Sabbath and to work on week-days; and that he and his men in a large factory, of which he was the manager, could not attend week-day services without neglecting their secular avocations.

We must allude to the widefield in our Church open to women. How valuable is their work in parishes as district visitors, Sunday-school teachers. How much is often done by the wife of a clergyman ministering to souls and bodies, employing social advantages. The order of deaconesses is being revived; sisterhoods are being established, and who does not rejoice in all this? At the same we may congratulate ourselves on having bounds and metes. For we read of a Baptist woman ordaining her own son, her husband being an efficient teacher in her Sunday-school; of a Unitarian clergyman going to Europe for four months and of his wife preaching and doing pastoral work to the satisfaction of the congregation during his absence. In several of the denominations the clergyman is regarded almost entirely as a teacher. The writer noticed newspaper accounts of the sermons of two clergymen in Boston; one a Unitarian, the other a Trinitarian, and the subject of both was newspapers. What is going on in this world is regarded as the legitimate subject of Sunday sermons by a public teacher who must think for his flock and tell them on Sundays of this world and its ways. With us heaven and how to get there, the obstacles in our own hearts, the three adversaries, the world, the flesh, and the devil, are subjects on which we desire instruction when we go to church to worship God and adore our blessed Master; and our clergymen are believed to have received especial graces and powers at ordination, when they are set apart from secular pursuits. We read that Joshua was full of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands upon him. Our laymen are admitted to Church councils, authority and work is given them in parochial organizations; and thus a knowledge of the world and its ways, skill in dealing with fallen men in making rules and regulations for their benefit is furnished. The writer will here mention an instance falling under his own observation where in a Congregationalist the grant of recognition of the relative position and duty of clergyman and layman was curiously shown. A distinguished professor in a medical school of a large university had a brother much esteemed and widely known as an eloquent preacher. The medical man being introduced to a stranger as Doctor C., was asked, "Are you the Doctor C., who preaches?" and answered, "No, I practice; my brother preaches." Not long after this was said he took to public preaching, and a few years later, meeting a friend on Sunday morning and inquiring, "Where are you going?" and being answered, "To church," he remarked, "Why I went there for years, but finding no one to pray for me as well as I can pray for myself, and listening to no sermon without thinking how much better a one I could write I gave up entirely going to church."

There may be time to refer briefly to another matter of some importance. St. James exhorts, "Confess your sins one to another." In course of time confession was made exclusively to the clergy, and great abuses called for reformation. In our Church confession is made to the priest, but is not obligatory, and frequent and habitual confessions are regarded by many as dangerous and unwholesome. Our Methodist brethren, priding themselves on being Scriptural, practice public confession to one another. A bishop was on a steamboat going about his diocese and a Methodist clergyman was a fellow-passenger. He expressed a great desire to be introduced to the bishop, and no one offering to do so, he accosted the bishop and said, "I have a question to ask you. Did you ever say that the Methodists practiced confession as well as the Roman Catholics?" "I said," was the reply, "that confession with the Methodists differed from that with the Roman Catholics, inasmuch as while the latter confessed their sins, the former confessed their virtues."

The laity in the Methodist and Congregational Churches have a discipline and a power which they have not with us. The Church clergyman, the first and for a time the sole inhabitant of Boston, was joined by and for years lived among his Independent brethren. Finally he left his home and went back to England, avowing as the reason that he had left his native land to escape the tyranny of lords bishops; but he had found that of lords brethren much more intolerable. In our Church at this time bishops and clergy are much more carefully guarded and protected than laymen. Canons and provisions for trial and deposition hedge them in, but the laymen can follow his own devices, and it very seldom happens that any layman is ever debarred from Church privileges by way of punishment or discipline. Certainly laymen need not ask for any greater freedom in belief or practice; but it is a question whether there should not be addi-

tional provision for discipline. Endowments being few and scanty, and pecuniary resources being so much under the control and at the disposition of the laity the clergyman is at a disadvantage when differences in opinion or practice arise. Those with gifts of fortune, intellect, or position are attracted in numbers to secular pursuits. As a Congregationalist the writer was brought up to regard the position of a clergyman as more favourable for working unto salvation. As a Churchman he asks, is not the clergyman more exposed to the assaults of the devil, who very cunningly lays in wait for those whose fall or failure is likely to be attended with mischief to the greater number? An old English friend long in this country was asked as to what was being done in the parish with which he was connected; for, from his position he must be a member of the vestry. His reply was, "I know nothing of the doings of the parish. I have always refused election to the vestry. I go to church to worship God, and I avoid being distracted by a knowledge of what is going on in being obliged to take part in the management of parochial matters." And is it wise for a layman to be desirous of appointment to places of honour and responsibility? Self-will and self-pleasing are bad enough in the management of the affairs of this world; but unless the laymen taking part in Church work be well on his guard and keep distinctly before him his responsibility to his Divine Master, peril and damage to his own soul may be the result. Sainly men have been remarkable for their reluctance to accept the highest offices of the Church, from their sense of the responsibility of the position and of their own frailty and insufficiency. And these examples may be profitable for all to whom humble and comparatively obscure work is assigned. A distinguished United States Senator, a Unitarian, was discoursing to a friend, a Churchman, and a very distinguished lawyer, on animal magnetism, at a time, thirty years ago, when much attention was being given to the subject. "Ah," said the latter, "I have a great advantage over you in considering this matter." "In what?" was the question. "I believe in the devil," was the answer. And we may well regret in our day that the agency of unseen powers of evil and good is so little recognized. The layman in his position as a soldier in the Church militant should appreciate the power and skill of his adversaries. He may be much occupied in the business of this world and well versed in its wisdom, but he needs to cultivate that wisdom resulting from a due appreciation of the relative importance of things temporal and things eternal.

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THE SACREDNESS OF THE DEAD BODY.

THE Church recites the Lesson for the Burial of the Dead as the Second Lesson at Evening prayer on the Sunday after Easter, in testimony of her faith in the resurrection of this flesh.

The sanctity of a believer's dead body was an early article of the Church's Creed; and the old Testament has numerous touching incidents showing how this Creed was also that of the pre-Christian Church.

There is a disposition in some quarters to think and speak contemptuously of the body. Even Christian men who recite the Creed with all sincerity are afflicted by this heresy, and half unconsciously regard the body as the seat of all evil, and the chief impediment to the soul's free flight toward heaven. They accept too literally that mistranslation of St. Paul's words which makes our "body of humiliation" "our vile body." They confound their body of flesh and bones with "the body of sin," and ascribe "the motions of sin in their members" to the members themselves. Or, again, the body is regarded as the mere domicile of the man, to be cast aside at death as a useless incumbrance. It is true that we build costly tombs and lay out beautiful cemeteries now, beside which an old-time church, with its matted weeds and luxuriant grass, its pestiferous vaults and crumbling tombstones, seems to bespeak a more neglectful age; but that God's acre was a sacred spot, which money could not buy and the world would not desecrate; while we sell out our costly tombs and cut up our cemeteries into building lots, and shoot the poor remnants of humanity into carts, to clear the way for the march of Mammon.

From all time men have exhibited some solicitude as to the disposition to be made of their bodies after death. To pass an unburied corpse without giving it at least the form of a burial was a shameful act in the estimation of an ancient Roman, and of men more ancient than he. Their poets taught that the unburied dead must wander a hundred years on the bank of the Stygian river before they might cross and rest. The Word of the Lord denounced it as a woe against Jeoiakim: "He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem, and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frosts."

We are told that this is all sentimental folly; and the body will turn to corruption anywhere, and to

the same unsightly corruption everywhere; that the green sea is as good a coverlet for that sleep as the green soil; and the roar of the ocean and the unceasing noises of the deep as sweet a lullaby to dead ears as the song of the birds, the rustle of foliage, or the soft crepitation of the growing herbage. But if a decent burial bring no comfort to the dead, the anticipation of it is a comforting thought for the dying; who, as they stand on the verge of the grave, and peer anxiously into its shadow, are not yet so freed from the body as to have no thought or care for its fate. Therefore, bury us not in Egypt, in the land of strangers, in the pathless ocean, on the battlefield, or in the Potter's Field of the unknown dead; cast not out our dust to the winds of heaven ere we have well begun our death-sleep; but carry up our bones to consecrated ground where our hopes lie buried before us; where our friends one by one have gathered; where our fathers sleep; where God's saints await their crown. The winding sheet and devouring worm are humiliation enough. Make our humiliation as decent as may be, and respect, though we be forgotten.

But is this sentiment—only sentiment? These bodies of ours are as truly a part of ourselves as our souls are. There is a wonderful physical identity stamped upon this flesh that survives all the changes of life, and makes it the same body from the cradle to the grave. Nor is the body one whit less honourable, after its kind, than the soul among the creatures of God. It is a body of humiliation now but that is the fault of the soul's transgression. It was created in the image of God, and it has not lost that image to the same extent that the soul has lost its moral likeness to God. It was created as immortal as the soul, and it recovers its lost immortality through the same Saviour who redeems the soul. It has shared and sympathized with all our experience, whether of good or of evil, of pleasure or of pain, of joy or of sorrow. We know that we must shortly put off this tabernacle and lay it in the dust. We know that it must itself be dust. But that dust is sacred to us as a part of ourselves, and whoever dishonours it dishonours us, whether we are conscious of the ignominy or not.

If there be any native dignity about a human body that makes it honourable, even in death and decay, there is a sanctity about a Christian body that makes dishonour done to it a desecration. If the fact that the soul has made this flesh its tabernacle exalts this flesh above the flesh of beasts, to what nobility is it not exalted by the fact that the Holy Ghost has made it His tabernacle? Every Christian corpse is like a consecrated church, which the rude accidents of war have left unused. No voice of prayer is heard therein; no songs; no notes of praise; no Gospel message echoes down the aisles. But there is the sacred desk with its Holy Bible and Liturgy; there is the venerable pulpit, eloquent with the words of life; there is the many-voiced organ; there are the pews and hassocks; there is the holy altar and the font, witnesses to the water and the blood of our redemption; all monitors of God, and memorials of the saints. Will you turn in a regiment who shall destroy the books, and rack the organ, and take the pulpit for a sentry box, and make the lecturn an orderly's desk, and quarter their horses in the pews? Nay! rather let the whole edifice be shattered into ruins than that one act of sacrilege should mock the sanctity of that house of God.

So every Christian body is a temple of the Holy Ghost. Its congregation of thoughts and faculties, of hopes and aspirations, and faith and love and mercy and humility and all holy graces, is scattered as an accident of the warfare with sin. But there are the lips which prayed the soul's prayers and poured out its complaints or thanksgivings. There are the hands which did Christ's work, and the feet that went on Christ's errands of love and mercy. There are the eyes which wept for sin, or glistened with hope; which looked up to heaven as seeing Him who is invisible; and if you needlessly mar one jot, or title of its holy order, you shall answer for sacrilege to the God who made it, to Christ, who redeemed it, and to the Holy Ghost, who sanctified it by His indwelling presence, and is still preserving it for the Resurrection.

A baptized body is a partaker of Christ's Resurrection Body. We are fed upon His Body in the Holy Eucharist. It is the assimilation of that heavenly food which forms in us that resurrection body in which we shall rise with Christ and be like Him. We inherit mortality from the first Adam. We derive immortality from the second Adam. "Except a man be born of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood ye have no life in you." "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

A human body which has been so joined to Christ the Good Man, is a sacred thing. It partakes of the sacredness of Christ's Body.