

ried on and administered by their successors, the certainty of its perpetuity being given them in the assurance, "Lo I am with you (and those who shall follow you) always, even unto the end of the world."

Their Master commanded them to wait in Jerusalem until He should pour down His Spirit upon them, to make His Presence felt and to give them wisdom and power to do His will and work. On the Day of Pentecost, after the Holy Spirit as tongues of fire had descended upon each of them, and had emboldened Peter to preach the first Christian sermon, which reached the hearts of the hearers and led 3,000 of them to cry, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" what was the answer? "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," thus at once fulfilling their Master's orders. It will be noted that St. Peter not only urged Baptism as an important duty, but, Divinely inspired and directed, He declares that in and by the Holy Rite their sins will be remitted and forgiven.

The importance of Baptizing as fulfilling a Divine Command becomes the more important when attached to it is the forgiveness of sins. Saul of Tarsus, afterwards the Apostle to the Gentiles, had the same command given to him by the voice of the Lord's Prophet, Ananias, to whom Christ had sent him, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins."

But while it is very evident that in Baptism sins are forgiven, there is a deeper significance in the fact than merely attributing the result and effect to obeying God's Command. Our Lord had said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." (John iii. 5.) And this doctrine of the new birth St. Paul taught in very many passages of his Epistles. He shows us that the Kingdom of God is Christ's Body, the Church, and that by becoming incorporated into the Mystical Body of Christ by Baptism we become members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven." In 1 Cor. xii. 13, 14, the Apostle says, "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body, . . . for the body is not one member but many." Also in v. 12, "As the body is one, and hath many members, so also is Christ;" and Eph. v. 30, "For we are members of His Body, of His Flesh, and of His Bones." Again, the Apostle says in v. 27, "We are the Body of Christ, and members in particular." And in 1 Eph. xxii. 23, "Christ is the Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body"; and 1 Col. i. 18, "And He is the Head of the Body, the Church." To Baptize an infant, therefore, is to bring it into the Church, and so to give it spiritual life by uniting it with Christ. To leave it unbaptized is to leave it spiritually without life, by leaving it without spiritual union with Christ. In Gal. iii. 26, the Apostle says, "Ye are all the children of God by Faith in Jesus Christ, for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

AN ITINERANT MINISTRY.

AN exchange says the Methodist Elders of the North-West, in their recent Convention at Minneapolis, have voted, by a decided majority, against itineracy. The explanation given for this

change is worthy of note. The same authority says:—

"In the progress of the religious world during the past half century, it has been found that ecclesiastical life has conformed more or less to the laws which govern commercial and social life. The greatest successes have followed persistent, intelligent and established effort year after year. The strongest churches and the greatest powers in the pulpit or the pastorate have been the work of the right man in one locality for the best part of his lifetime. The conspicuous successes in the Methodist denomination have been contributed to largely by the evasion of the itinerate plan. Now the time has come when the demand for a reform comes from within the church. Itineracy is looked upon simply as a confession of weakness, and it is urged that the laws of natural selection and survival of the fittest shall allot to each minister his field of labor, and continue it to him so long as he shall be equal to its needs. The action by the Minneapolis Convention is a salutary one, which will commend itself not only to the ranks of Methodist clergymen, but to their congregations."

So that, after all, in this as in so many other things, the practice of the Church of England has come to be recognized as the right and proper one. And it is not difficult to understand why it should be so. An able man comes into a place and for one, two or three years, faithfully and successfully ministers to his charge, he is succeeded at the end of—not longer than—three years, by a man whose abilities are much inferior, and whose modes of action are as different from his predecessor's as the poles are asunder, with the result that the work is worse than undone, and the one who has been removed, seeing perhaps how his work appears to lack permanence, grows discouraged and disheartened.

Now such a possibility is unfair and unjust not only to the first man and his people, but also to the unsuccessful one, who finds that following an able brother destroys any chance of making of value the minimum of talent which God has entrusted him with.

(On the other hand, had the first man gravitated to an important place and continued in it, he would have done a great and permanent work; and had the man of less ability been put in charge of a mission adapted to his powers, he, perhaps, by patient and faithful service, would have been blessed in his field of labour to a degree comparing most favourably with the larger work of his more showy and able brother.

COFFEE ROOMS.

THESE valuable institutions are commending themselves more and more to the support of those members of the Church who desire to see some practical efforts put forth to protect the laboring classes from the snares of the tavern and bar-room.

The advantages of the Coffee Rooms sustained by the Church of England Temperance Society, in Halifax, are appreciated by many, and they are comfortable places of resort, where a wholesome meal may be had at small expense.

Reading matter is wanted; and if our numerous readers, many of whom receive large supply of magazines and newspapers, will kindly furnish some of these for the benefit of frequenters of the Rooms, they may be doing good service to the wayfaring people. The Coffee Rooms are at the foot of George Street—Market Square—and in Upper Water Street, near to and south of Cornwallis St.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"The Duet between Parson and Clerk."

To the Editor of the Church Guardian.

SIR,—Likely you have often heard of the above in reference to the custom in our Mother Churches in the old country, of the employment of Parish clerks, whose chief duties consisted, we are told, in responding at the various places of the Church's Services appointed for the people. In my travels in many parts of this Dominion I have attended Services where, to me, the "duet" would have been an improvement on the custom of the audible services consisting—a few loud whispers excepted—of the minister's voice alone.

Your correspondent could never thoroughly appreciate the wit of the above "joke," as most of the Churches where he attended in his young days had a "parish school," whose children were taught to, and did, respond at such places as are appointed in the Prayer Book; hence, doubtless, his failure to receive that amount of amusement he has seen enjoyed by others about the duet.

There is to my mind something radically wrong in a congregation that does not contain a few who are willing to lead the people in the responses. As at one time a Lay Reader, I have painfully felt this grave negligence, and can fully sympathize with a Clergyman whose lot is cast in a *dumb* audience! Yet, does it not, ought it not to make a minister of such a congregation consider if a remedy cannot be found to cause, at least, an improvement? That we have a Service, when rightly rendered, that is at once both beautiful and elevating, we have the testimony of men not of the Church Catholic—prayers in language not excelled in general excellence in any other work on parchment or paper. And I am convinced that he or she who neglects to take their share, in a hearty manner, and in an audible voice loses a large amount of that happiness enjoyed by those who determine to do their appointed part—happiness through a conscientiousness of having done their duty, and of contributing towards making our public services appear to outsiders something more than "a chilling, dull and spiritless performance." That the one or more who would be willing to head a reform in a congregation so given over to *deadness* would require some Christian courage, I do not doubt! That we find it hard to be unfavorably commented upon, when endeavouring to do what we conceive to be right, is not to be wondered at. Yet, when we feel we have the assistance of God's Holy Spirit, what need we care what man may say about it?

And now, a few words to those "who have the rule over us." Is there a clergyman of our beloved Church who has a nearly *non*-responding congregation but who would not be happier for change in this respect? I think not. Well, the remedy I sincerely believe, in the *largest measure*, lies with ourselves. Not that a change can be effected at once, or in a few weeks, perhaps, yet, by choosing one or more willing souls—man or woman—who could be convinced of its necessity, and inducing them to take the lead, if for no other consideration, for our dear Lord's sake; and believe me, Reverend Sirs, you will soon have cause for thankfulness at the marked improved Services. This is one remedy. Yet the important one I have yet to name—it is "FEED MY LAMBS." Here is the Hope, here to me is the Anchor of our beloved Church. The children of the Church must be taught *Church* doctrine; and, instead of the time being taken up at Sunday Schools with requiring the children to learn by rote a lot of verses from the Bible or other sources, let the Sunday School open with a portion of the Prayer Book Service. Teach them to respond *loudly*, yet reverently, and keep constantly before their young minds the glorious history of our Catholic and Apostolic Church—of its having within itself every virtue possessed by other Christian communities; and, above all, the *fact* of our Catholic Church's authority as a Church since Ancient and Apostolic days. Yours respectfully,

J. W. POTTER.